A

GOSSIP'S STORY,

AND

A LEGENDARY TALE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

ADVANTAGES OF EDUCATION.

"With calm ſeverity unpaſſion'd age
"Detects the ſpecious fallacies of youth,
"Reviews the motives which no more engage,
"And weighs each action in the ſcale of truth."

MRS. CARTER'S POEMS.

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A

GOSSIP'S STORY,

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LEGENDARY TALE.

CHAPTER XIX.

An important incident, announced in pretty language.

BUT while the fair Nymph thus continued to hang her virgin offerings on the ſhrine of friendſhip, Mr. Clermont acknowledged himſelf ſubdued by the irreſiſtible force of a ſuperior divinity. His heart was naturally ſuſceptible of the power of beauty, and his youthful imagination, unreſtrained by experience, and unſubdued by time, annexed to the lovely form of Marianne Dudley, every idea of 'perfect, fair, and good;' all the images of excellence that

" Fable ever feign'd,
" Or youthful poets fancy when they love."

He perceived through the clear tranſparency of her exquiſite complexion, a mind unclouded by any ſhade of error, and radiated by all the ſplendor of grace and virtue: and in the ſwimming luſtre of her azure eyes he not inaccurately read the ſoft emotions of a melting ſoul. Did ten thouſand worlds preſent equal attractions to that of calling ſuch an angel his? I am confident every lover under twenty will anſwer—no.

To accelerate the conqueſt of his heart, love was increaſed by difficulty. Her rejection of Mr. Pelham was a convincing proof that ſhe was not eaſily won; and though the ſmile, which beamed in her lovely face at his approach, might have told him he was a welcome gueſt, he had too high an idea of her perfections, to ſuppoſe they would be the reward of his vows. But ſhould the goddeſs be propitious, might not parental authority inter-

interfere? This, though a probable, was only a ſecondary terror; for ſuppoſing himſelf bleſſed with her favour, he felt diſpoſed to brave the frowns of fortune and of fate.

Miſs Dudley had declined any family intercourſe till her father's return; but Mr. Clermont always found excuſes for another call. Sometimes he apprehended one of the ladies had a ſlight cold, and then civility required that he ſhould make enquiries after her health. Again, Marianne expreſſed a wiſh that ſhe could get a Canary-bird, and the attentive lover had it in his power to preſent her with a charming little ſongſter; another day, ſhe was hardly miſtreſs of a favourite piece of muſick, and Mr. Clermont was ſo happy in his manner of teaching, that ſhe learned much more from his inſtructions than the leſſons of her maſter. Then on ſtarting a literary topick, ſhe had not read an author which he commended, and fortunately having the book at home, he inſiſted upon bringing it

next day. Thus ever reſtleſs but when in her company, he repeated his viſits, gazed upon her charms, magnified her perfections, and drained, even to its dregs, the intoxicating cup of love.

Such an admirer, or to ſpeak with more preciſion an adorer, was too much adapted to Marianne's taſte to be viewed with real indifference. But the paſſion, which in Mr. Clermont's heart flamed with ardour, and ſpoke with animation; in the ſofter character of Marianne aſſumed the form of gentle melancholy. Louiſa perceived with pain the change in her ſiſter's manner, and eaſily divined the cauſe. The behaviour of Mr. Clermont was too marked to allow her to doubt of his ſentiments; yet ſhe prudently wiſhed that her ſiſter might not beſtow her *whole* heart, till certain that *no* obſtacles would ariſe to make her regret its loſs.

The frequent viſits of Mr. Clermont during her father's abſence, gave Miſs Dudley the more concern, as ſhe knew not how to decline them. She endeavoured

voured to engage her ſiſter in ſociety, but Marianne's reluctance to quit her beloved ſolitude was invincible. At laſt, ſhe ſucceeded ſo far as to prevail upon her to take a tour, for a few days, amongſt the beautiful ſcenery with which they were ſurrounded; but hardly had they proceeded to the end of the firſt ſtage, when Mr. Clermont and his ſiſter overtook them, who, as he thought, very fortunately, had juſt ſet out upon exactly the ſame route. How was Louiſa to eſcape this new embarraſſment. Even the *prudent* Marianne thought they could not decline his propoſal of joining their party, without evident rudeneſs.

As no vigilance could now guard againſt repeated interviews, Miſs Dudley felt herſelf obliged to commit her ſiſter to the guard of her own circumſpection. Frequent converſations amongſt the delightful objects which nature preſented to their view, ſo forcibly encreaſed Mr. Clermont's enthuſiaſm, that he no longer brooked the reſtraint of ſilence. He

ſeized an opportunity of addreſſing his charmer, as he was conducting her along a woodland dell, at a little diſtance from the reſt of the party. With all the glowing colouring of romantick tenderneſs, with all the impaſſioned eloquence of youthful impetuoſity, he communicated the ſecret of his heart. His bluſhing miſtreſs liſtened in ſilent confuſion, her complacency at ſeeing her own idea of a lover realized, was abated only by recollecting, that ſhe "was ſworn never to think of love." Being preſſed for an anſwer, ſhe with ſome heſitation mentioned her determined preference of a ſingle life; but intermixed this declaration with ſo much eſteem for Mr. Clermont, and ſo much pity for his miſery, that though ſhe doubtleſs intended to blaſt all his hopes, ſhe did not actually reduce him to deſpair. He implored her forgiveneſs: it was readily granted; he then intreated he might preſerve the tender regard, the enchanting confidence with which he had been favoured. To this

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the lady aſſented, on condition of his never naming the word love; he in reply promiſed to confine his unhappy paſſion *if poſſible* to his own boſom, and thus the quondam lovers became oſtenſible friends.

The reſt of the tour was extremely agreeable to both parties. Marianne's ſpirits, which probably had ſuffered by too cloſe confinement, received conſiderable benefit from the excurſion. The change was ſo viſible to Louiſa, that ſhe could not avoid rallying her ſiſter upon the cauſe of this ſudden alteration. Marianne's heart was formed for confidence, and ſhe readily informed Louiſa of the circumſtance of Mr. Clermont's addreſſes, and her total rejection. Miſs Dudley did not appear to think the denial *quite* ſo peremptory as Marianne intended it ſhould prove; and that opinion ſeemed confirmed by the vivacity of the rejected lover. Perplexed at this ſuggeſtion, Marianne determined to appeal to her Eliza Milton, who was an excellent caſuiſt in all points of love and honour. On the

evening ſhe returned home, ſhe retired early from ſupper, in order to write down the whole particulars. But the affecting ſight which ſhe ſaw on entering her dreſſing-room, incapacitated her for uſing her pen. It was no other than the little canary-bird, her favourite pet, lifeleſs at the bottom of its cage, and inſenſible to the careſſes of its weeping miſtreſs. I do not inſinuate that Marianne's regret was increaſed by any aſſociation of ideas; ſhe was paſſionately fond of all kinds of birds, and certainly did not prize this the more, from having been the preſent of a *rejected* lover. The accident however afforded Mr. Clermont a freſh opportunity of urging his ſuit, for aſſuming the character of the dead warbler, he preſented Marianne with the verſes following:

SONNET,

ON THE DEATH OF A CANARY-BIRD.

Far from the ſunny iſle, and vine hung grove,
My native ſoil, to Britain's temp'rate ſky
I came, to learn the tale of hopeleſs love,
To chaunt its woes to Delia, and to die.

Oft

Oft ſhall the penſive maid thoſe notes recal,
Whoſe varied melody did once engage,
And oft the tear of kind regret ſhall fall,
As ſad ſhe gazes on my vacant cage.
Yet, gentle mourner, not thy tears or ſighs,
Can life's extinguiſh'd taper re-illume;
And when for thee deſpairing Strephon dies,
Thy angel pity cannot break his tomb:
Yet now ſuch pow'r is lodg'd in thy ſoft eyes,
One tender glance would clear the morbid gloom.

Marianne diſcovered in this compoſition a charm infinitely ſuperior to that of a mere well-turned compliment, and cenſured Louiſa's commendation of the poetry, as by no means ſufficiently animated. Mrs. Patty who happened to be preſent when the ſubject was diſcuſſed between the ſiſters, joined in the converſation, and did not, by any means, "damn with faint praiſe." She had now commenced as warm an advocate for Mr. Clermont, as ſhe had been for his predeceſſors Pelham and Alſop, not from the mercenary motives which induced her to plead for the latter gentleman, but from

the natural affection which ſhe bore to handſome people. Though her lady ſeldom interrupted her when Mr. Clermont was her theme; ſtill ſhe ſo conſtantly perſiſted in her determination of "withering upon the virgin thorn," that Patty began to apprehend ſome ſerious diſaſter muſt befal her, as a judgment upon her obſtinacy: either that ſhe would be metamorphoſed into a rock of marble, or fetched away by the ghoſt of ſome lover, who had died in deſpair. Reſolved therefore, by giving fair warning, to diſcharge her own duty, ſhe conſtantly entertained her lady during her hours of attendance, with the dreadful conſequences of female diſdain, beginning with Bateman hanging himſelf for love, and ending with the cruelty of Barbara Allen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

An example of poliſhed benevolence furniſhes a ſtrong argument againſt melancholy diſcontent.

WHILE the wavering balance of female reſolution continued ſuſpended, before Mrs. Patty's eloquence, or ſome weightier motive made the nodding ſcale preponderate in Mr. Clermont's favour, Mr. Dudley returned home. His arrival relieved Louiſa from much anxiety for his health, and peace of mind, and many apprehenſions for her ſiſter's future tranquillity, as ſhe was now certain of the aſſiſtance of an able adviſer. Mr. Dudley's account of his own affairs was more and more diſtreſſing. The limitations under which the eſtate had been bequeathed to Mr. Tonnereau, did not upon further examination appear to be ſurmountable; and even government had given up all hopes of the ſafety of the

Leeward Iſland fleet: the underwriter too, who had enſured the ſhip in which Mr. Dudley's property was embarked, declared himſelf reduced by repeated loſſes, to a ſtate of inſolvency. Yet though expoſed to the preſſure of ſo many various misfortunes, Louiſa with delight perceived that her father's mind had loſt much of that gloomy deſpondency, which depreſſed it when he left Stannadine, and which had appeared to his excellent daughter a ſeverer misfortune, than the loſs of that wealth ſhe had been accuſtomed to enjoy.

Mr. Dudley accounted for the change. "Perhaps, my love," ſaid he, "of all the evils attendant on poverty, none are more to be lamented than the querulous humour it excites, even in liberal and benevolent minds. People in unhappy circumſtances are not only apt to view the comforts they are forced to relinquiſh, with repining regret, almoſt approaching to envy; they too often conſider the ſons of affluence, as enjoying

enjoying their calamities, making them the ſubject of illiberal mirth, and looking down with contempt upon the children of adverſity. The real afflictions incident to penury, are leſs harraſſing to our fortitude, than the ſuppoſition of our being inſulted by

" The proud man's contumely,
" The inſolence of office, and the ſpurns,
" Which patient merit of th' unworthy takes.

" Bad as the world is, I believe this happens leſs frequently than the unhappy ſuppoſe; and doubtleſs it is their duty to avoid indulging theſe painful ſenſibilities; but they are ſo congenial to a reflecting independent mind ſtruggling with diſtreſs, and are ſo ſtrengthened by the general opinion of mankind, and the opinions not only of poets, but of moral writers and divines; that it is almoſt impoſſible for a perſon to feel pecuniary difficulties, without ſuppoſing themſelves to be illuſed and forſaken. It was with theſe

ſentiments

ſentiments I left you, and though not inſenſible to neglect myſelf, I anticipated it with greater terror, as I imagined it would fall with ten-fold violence upon you; who have been accuſtomed to be welcomed with delight, heard with attention, and anſwered with reſpect. Mr. Pelham, my dear, has made me open my eyes to a brighter proſpect; and though few, like this excellent young man, meaſure their conduct to the unfortunate by that divine benevolence, which regards the keen ſuſceptibility of miſery, inſtead of the cold rules of civility,—though few, I ſay, like him divert by their kind attentions the recollection of that diſtreſs, which the yet unſubdued ſpirit of independence will not permit their fortune to relieve; yet ſtill, Louiſa, there are many generous minds in the world; and much of the neglect of which affliction complains is caſual and accidental. May you, my dear, conſider it as ſuch! or rather may you meet with a Pelham, to raiſe you above the torment of theſe reflections!"

Mr. Dudley's concluſion was more affecting to Louiſa than he intended. She would have repeated his energetick wiſh, but recollecting herſelf, determined to think of this moſt amiable man, only as the friend and comforter of her father.

Mr. Dudley's intention of paying a reſpectful viſit of thanks to Lord Clermont, was prevented by that nobleman's aſſiduous politeneſs; for he waited upon him the morning after his return, and preſented his ſon to him, as one whoſe higheſt ambition was to obtain his approbation. Lord Clermont expreſſed his wiſh for an intimacy between the families, with a warmth which neither admitted of denial nor evaſion; and plainly ſhewed that more than a *neighbourly* intercourſe was deſired. Mr. Clermont's behaviour afforded a further explanation, and though the delicacy inſeparable from female attachment prevented Marianne from making any intentional diſcovery of her ſentiments; yet the bluſh of pleaſure which lighted up her face at her lover's

lover's approach, and the penſive abſence of mind which followed his departure, intimated a preference which the diſcerning father hardly felt inclined to limit to the name of friendſhip.

Lord Clermont did not long permit Mr. Dudley to found his opinion upon ſuſpicion only; he avowed his ſon's attachment, and his warm approbation of his choice, in terms which ſeemed to indicate an apprehenſion that difficulties would be ſtarted on Mr. Dudley's ſide. What then was his aſtoniſhment when that gentleman declared, that his daughter was an abſolute miſtreſs of her perſon and fortune, and that if ſhe inclined to favour Mr. Clermont, the paternal ſanction would be chearfully beſtowed? But in order to account for his Lordſhip's ſurpriſe, I muſt ſtate ſome circumſtances in his hiſtory and character.

Lord Clermont then, was one of thoſe who imagine they are thoroughly acquainted with human life, from having contemplated it on the dark ſide. Diſappointed

appointed in his expectations of preferment at court, he retired into the country, with ſomewhat of a ſaturnine caſt of character; the aſperity of which was not ſoftened by the enjoyment of domeſtick happineſs. His union with Lady Clermont was effected by intereſted motives, and as the badneſs of her temper, and the inferiority of her whole character, was a perpetual ſource of diſquiet, he attributed his infelicity to his own folly, in marrying a woman whom he beheld with indifference; erroneouſly ſuppoſing that if he had really loved her, her failings would have given him leſs pain. This predilection in favour of love-matches, ſtrongly warring with his ruling paſſion, avarice, induced him to look forward with apprehenſion, to the period of his children arriving at maturity; for he ſuppoſed it improbable, that Cupid and Plutus could agree in their choice, and each of theſe deities ſeemed in his eye of equal importance. To prevent his children therefore from falling in love, he educated

educated them with ſtrict ſeverity, and railed at the paſſion with increaſing violence, till his accidental interview with Marianne Dudley, and his ſon's viſible attachment to her, relieved his painful apprehenſions, and changed his invectives into encomiums. Habitual ſeverity prevented him from owning to Mr. Clermont the ſatisfaction he felt, but the young lover's impatience to lead his charmer to the altar, was hardly more violent than his father's deſire effectually to ſecure him from the poſſibility of being attached to ſome beautiful beggar, or of ſacrificing his future comforts at the ſhrine of unamiable riches.

The unfounded rumour reſpecting Mr. Dudley's intentions of reſtraining Marianne from marrying, had reached the Park; and Lord Clermont conſidered it as too probable to want authenticity. He eſteemed it a very fortunate circumſtance, that his ſon's acquaintance with the ladies had commenced during the father's abſence; and inſtead of reſtraining,

ing, encouraged his frequent viſits to Stannadine, in order that he might ſecure the affections of Marianne, before any oppoſition could be ſtarted. His obſervations on her behaviour convinced him that his plan had ſo far ſucceeded, and he conſidered the compliment he paid her father in aſking his aſſent, to be merely a ſtep to bring the affair to a criſis. That aſſent, given with no other reſtriction than what his child's happineſs ſeemed to demand, aſtoniſhed his Lordſhip; but an adept in *the ways of the world* will not aſcribe any action to the principle of diſintereſted virtue, which is capable of being referred to conſummate hypocriſy.

Lord Clermont on his return to the Park, ſent for his ſon to his cloſet. The poliſhed urbanity of manners, which diſtinguiſhed this nobleman in company, did not enter into his domeſtick arrangements, and Mr. Clermont with reluctant ſteps obeyed the ſummons of a father, who, except in permitting his viſits to Stannadine, had always appeared to combat

bat his wiſhes; and who never called him to a private conference, but only to give him a pointed reproof. Even now that he had the moſt tranſporting tidings to communicate, he could not reſolve to do it in a gracious manner. "Edward," ſaid he, in a ſtern voice, "I wiſh to know if you have ſo far forgotten your duty, as to engage your affections to Miſs Marianne Dudley, without previouſly obtaining *my* permiſſion." Conſcious of the error, which he knew not how to vindicate, and could not diſown, Mr. Clermont was ſilent. "I perceive," reſumed his Lordſhip, "that my ſuſpicions are juſt. I ſuppoſe, Sir, I have not deſerved your confidence. I am an unnatural father, am I not?" The poor youth, ſuppoſing the next ſentence would contain a peremptory mandate to baniſh him from one on whom his life depended, and againſt whom no reaſonable objection could be urged, could not give a negative reply to his father's interrogatories; and remained dumb with terror and confuſion.

After

After his Lordſhip had thus gratified himſelf by the indulgence of parental power; he thought proper graciouſly to forgive him, and after ſlightly mentioning Marianne's inferiour rank, expreſſed his willingneſs to overlook *that* objection in conſequence of her merit, and his deſire to enſure his ſon's happineſs. He then related what had paſſed between him and Mr. Dudley, and claimed the acknowledgment which duty and gratitude muſt excite, in return for ſuch conſiderate goodneſs. Mr. Clermont in a tranſport of joy flung himſelf at his father's feet, and acknowledged that he had made him the happieſt of men; and his Lordſhip, while he raiſed him and held him to his heart, experienced for perhaps the *firſt* time in his life the real bleſſing of being a father.

Nothing now remained but to gain the approbation of Lady Clermont, and to prevail upon the lovely maid to ſanction their hopes. The former, my Lord was too much of a faſhionable huſband to conſider as of much importance; and

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the latter he was inclined to hope would not prove an Herculean labour.

CHAP. XXI.

A fair Platoniſt is compelled to marry, as a leſs hazardous expedient, than refining the opinions of an illiberal age.

THE lover's taſk of propitiating his Goddeſs was rendered leſs difficult by Mr. Dudley; who, immediately upon the departure of Lord Clermont, informed his daughter of the purport of that noble-man's viſit, and requeſted her deciſion.

Marianne, with bluſhes as animated and as beautiful as thoſe of the morning, expreſſed a lively ſenſe of Mr. Clermont's merits; but though ſhe felt for him a tender friendſhip, and a warm eſteem, ſhe ſcarce ſuppoſed her regard amounted to love, a paſſion of which ſhe believed her heart never would be ſuſceptible.

Mr. Dudley, who thought otherwiſe, replied, "Where, my dear, did you learn your

your opinion of love? If neither warm eſteem, nor tender friendſhip expreſſes the ſentiments it inſpires, by what other words can you define them?"

Marianne, a little piqued at having her knowledge of a ſcience, in which ſhe believed herſelf an adept, called in queſtion, anſwered, that if ſhe was convinced it would promote Mr. Clermont's happineſs, ſhe could chearfully reſign him to another.

"You only tell me, my dear, that you are not ſelfiſh, mean, and illiberal; qualities of which I never ſuppoſed you capable."

The young lady perceiving that ſhe had conſiderably the diſadvantage in the argument, begged her father to give her *his* opinion of her lover.

Tenderly preſſing her hand, "I am certain," ſaid he, "my dear child is not one of thoſe who diſcover irreſiſtible attractions in the ſplendor of a coronet, or the poſſeſſion of immenſe wealth. I therefore will not conſider that Mr. Clermont's

mont's pretenſions are by thoſe advantages rendered irreſiſtible. He appears to be an intelligent, agreeable young man, of a frank, candid diſpoſition; and I am informed is irreproachable in his morals. As a lover, I preſume, he muſt be as much of an Amadis de Gaul, as modern manners will permit, and therefore certainly adapted to your taſte in that particular."

Marianne ſmiled. "You are ſevere upon me, Sir, but is this all you have obſerved of him."

"I could ſay," reſumed Mr. Dudley, "that his character is not yet compleatly formed. He has been educated in retirement, under the eye of (if the world ſays right) a ſtern father. Such a ſituation, ſo ſecure from every temptation to do wrong, and precluded from the poſſibility of acting and judging for himſelf, obliges me to conſider Mr. Clermont's future conduct, to be rather a matter of opinion, than admitting of a poſitive concluſion. He is extremely young, lively, and

and poſſeſſed of ſtrong paſſions; for ſuch an one the world will ſpread many ſnares, from which I ſincerely hope his attachment to you may preſerve him. Our ſex, my dear, is formed to fill an ampler ſpace in the world than yours, and the ſphere of an Engliſh nobleman's actions is an extenſive one. It is always fortunate for a woman, when ſhe marries a man whoſe character can in ſome degree be aſcertained, by his having been for ſome time under his own guidance. You who are formed to fulfil the retired, but not leſs important duties of life, can always be properly eſtimated while under the paternal wing; the attentive, ſubmiſſive daughter, will make a tender, obliging wife; the retired, amiable maid, will form the prudent, domeſtick matron. But the manners of the man cannot be ſo well determined by the virtues of the youth; particularly if his father, like Lord Clermont, aſſumes that method of behaviour, which indeed tries his patience and good humour, but does not eradicate

any wrong propenſity, or call forth the latent qualities of his ſoul, by confidence and generous friendſhip. I muſt therefore upon the whole conſider Mr. Clermont as a leſs eligible huſband than Mr. Pelham."

Marianne entreated her father, never to mention a name which ſhe never heard without feeling diſlike, bordering upon averſion. She then aſked her father if patience and good humour were the only virtues he diſcovered in Mr. Clermont.

The fretful impatience with which ſhe interdicted Mr. Dudley from mentioning *his* friend, and the tacit reproof her queſtion conveyed, determined the obſervant father to ſuppreſs further obſervations; and endeavouring to give the converſation a lively turn, he told Marianne that patience and good humour were very good *connubial* virtues.

Still Marianne could not think of marriage, and wiſhed that Mr. Clermont's ſentiments coincided with her's, in preferring

ſerring (for at leaſt ſome years) the gentle tie of friendſhip.

"Will you tell me, my dear," ſaid Mr. Dudley, "what the married ſtate is, if it is not friendſhip, in its moſt lively, extenſive, and exalted ſenſe? Is it not an union of intereſts and affections, ſanctioned by an indiſſoluble tie? Does it not call for mutual eſteem, confidence, forbearance, and tenderneſs? Contemplate it, my dear, in the light of a connection at firſt deſigned by divine wiſdom, for the mutual advantage of two fallible creatures, and not as a fairy region of ecſtacy and perfect happineſs, inhabited by perfect beings, whoſe every wiſh, ſentiment, and action flows in uniſon. I would not ſhock your delicacy, Marianne, but I muſt tell you, that the world is exceedingly apt to call in queſtion the exiſtence of that platonick affection you ſeem to entertain; and I will apprize you, that it is neceſſary, either to receive Mr. Clermont's viſits in the acknow-

ledged character of your lover, or to requeſt him to diſcontinue them.

Marianne was exceedingly diſpleaſed at the world's want of candour, ſentiment, and refinement; but as more expert reformers than herſelf had often in vain tried to correct its prejudices, ſhe did not feel ſufficient courage to dare its cenſures, and to deſpiſe its frowns. The compaſſion inſeparable from her diſpoſition, prevented her from adopting the laſt alternative propoſed by her father; as its effects would inevitably prove fatal to poor Clermont. But while ſhe heſitated, perplexed, and unreſolved, the lover arrived to plead his own cauſe. His arguments, confirmed by a thouſand vows of eternal gratitude, unremitting attention, unalterable, tender, inviolable love, were ſucceſsful: and Marianne conſented to accompany him to the altar.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

The Author's predilection for declamation, induces her to make no uſe of a fine opportunity for introducing elegant deſcription.

NO ſooner had the lady's conſent been obtained, than the Clermonts, as if fearful that ſhe would retract it, urged on their ſuit, with the additional requeſt of a ſpeedy union. My Lord, with the pettiſh impatience common to diſcontented people, would not believe that an event ſo agreeable to his wiſhes would take place, without the intervention of ſome mortifying circumſtance to abate his ſatisfaction. His fears of Mr. Dudley's oppoſition being removed, by that gentleman's cheerful acquieſcence, he adopted another ſet of apprehenſions; and as he had diſcovered the perplexed ſtate of the father's affairs, began to fear a marriage with the daughter might entail upon his ſon the protection and ſupport of two

beggars; and to this he calculated Marianne's fortune was unequal.

A little time previous to his being certainly aſſured of Mr. Dudley's misfortunes, his Lordſhip in converſation gave a hint, which at leaſt proved him to be a man of forecaſt, as it is generally termed. The purport of it was, that though Mrs. Alderſon had thought proper to diſtinguiſh Marianne as her favourite, he hoped Mr. Dudley would ſtill remember ſhe was *his* daughter. Mr. Dudley not entering into the force of this ſuggeſtion, anſwered it by declarations of the affection he felt for ſuch an amiable child; and in the warmth of paternal tranſport, repeated many inſtances of the tender attachment ſhe had ſhewn to his perſon, and attention to his intereſts; adding, that he could hardly have expected ſuch regard, conſidering that he had been ſeparated from her in her early years, when the heart receives the moſt lively impreſſions. The deep diſcernment of Lord Clermont, reflecting afterwards upon

theſe words, and comparing them with the ſtate of Mr. Dudley's circumſtances, led him to ſuſpect that they conveyed more of deſign, than of paternal tenderneſs; in other words, that he intended to take advantage of the filial virtue he commended; his Lordſhip therefore thought it right to take an opportunity of ſhewing him, that he would find ſome difficulties to impede his deſign.

The ſteady honour which was an inmate of Mr. Dudley's breaſt in every ſituation, anticipated his Lordſhip's cold prudence. On recollecting the converſation, he perceived, that "more was meant than met the ear;" and to prevent the expectations of avarice from exceeding their probable gratification, he determined, not only to inform Lord Clermont, that Marianne's fortune had been limited to Mrs. Alderſon's bounty, by expreſs agreement, when ſhe and her ſiſter were infants, but that in fact he had now nothing to bequeath. Determined to conquer falſe ſhame, ſince unconſcious of

intentional error, he frankly ſtated his alarming ſituation. My Lord heard him with much *ſang froid*, his eyes fixed on a beautiful landſcape of Claude's, which hung at the other end of the ſaloon. When Mr. Dudley had finiſhed, he expreſſed great concern, but intermixed his conſolations with reproofs for his miſplaced confidence, declaring that he very well knew the inſtability of Tonnereau's credit a twelvemonth ago. He did not ſtop to hear Mr. Dudley exculpate himſelf, as he attempted to do, by pleading, that they were old family friends, and that his long abſence from England gave him leſs opportunity of knowing the ſtate of mercantile credit than others: his Lordſhip went on in a very compoſed, careleſs manner, to aſk how he meant to diſpoſe of himſelf, and what were his future plans reſpecting his daughter.

"People of our age, my Lord," ſaid Mr. Dudley, with a warmth he could not reſtrain, "may employ themſelves better than in forming diſtant plans for the ſupport

port of an exiſtence they may almoſt hourly expect to reſign. I felt misfortune at a time when I looked forward to many years, which hope had dreſſed in gay alluring colours: if I *then* ſuſtained my trials with firmneſs, much more may I now, when experience has taught me the inſufficiency and inſtability of temporal bleſſings; and when nature reminds me of a ſpeedy ſummons from all ſublunary proſpects. With reſpect to Louiſa, I am happy in ſeeing her poſſeſs a dignity and compoſure of mind, which will in any circumſtances prevent her from ſinking into deſpair. Both of us my lord, have independent ſpirits. We can neither ſolicit nor accept the cold aſſiſtance of reluctant friendſhip. Fortunately for her, her grandfather's prudence placed the means of procuring her the neceſſaries of life, beyond the power of my indiſcretion; and in all my troubles, I have the conſolation to reflect, that the child, whom my folly injured, has the ability, as well as

the virtue, to offer me an humble but ſecure aſylum."

"Your numerous friends, Mr. Dudley, will doubtleſs prevent you from putting the young lady's filial piety to an inconvenient trial. I ſhould, for inſtance, think my ſon would be extremely happy; but really there is no anſwering for young men; and people of quality are often embarraſſed to ſupport what the world expects from them. But ſuppoſe we mention the affair to Edward."

"By no means, my Lord. My expectations from Mr. Clermont extend no further than to his making my Marianne happy. In ſo doing, he will confer upon me a laſting obligation; and my heart is too proud to be eaſy under the ſenſe of multiplied favours. Could I have ſubmitted to become a penſioner upon Marianne's bounty, I believe I could eaſily have taken advantage of the melting kindneſs of her temper; and by depriving her of the advantages ſhe had a right to

expect,

expect, have ſecured myſelf in affluence. But as I have taken no diſhonourable ſtep to ſecure myſelf from poverty, I truſt I ſhall not want firmneſs to endure it."

Though Lord Clermont (practiſed in the ways of the world) was not inclined to place implicit confidence in declamatory integrity, the ſerene firmneſs which irradiated Mr. Dudley's countenance, almoſt induced him to lament, that a man of ſuch principles ſhould be left the unaſſiſted prey of misfortune. To do juſtice to his Lordſhip's benevolence, he really felt an inclination to ſtand forth as an active friend; a wiſh which like many of the deſires human nature is apt to entertain, ſeemed to encreaſe with the improbability of its completion. Upon the whole, he conſidered this converſation to be *very* ſatisfactory: a connection with a ruined man was not indeed deſirable, but when poverty was accompanied with the firm ſpirit of haughty independence, it was infinitely leſs troubleſome to its acquaintance and friends. The

humane might dare to expreſs their ſympathy; and the polite venture an offer of ſervice, without any hazard of having appropriate ſervices annexed to general expreſſions.

He therefore hurried on his ſon's nuptials with additional impatience, and Mr. Clermont ſeconding his ſolicitations with all the ardour of young romantick love. Marianne found her maidenly reluctance yield to the entreaties of ſuch importunate ſuitors. Within a month from the time of Mr. Dudley's return, Mr. Clermont had the tranſport of hearing his bluſhing bride publickly confirm, with ſolemn vows, the tender aſſurances, ſhe had before given him, of eternal love.

The younger part of my readers will doubtleſs expect a deſcription of the nuptial ceremony, the bride's paraphernalia, and all the gay et cætera of a wedding; which often diverts the juvenile mind from reflecting upon the important duties this grand change in female life preſcribes. I had propoſed myſelf the pleaſure

pleaſure of gratifying them in this particular; but when theſe affairs came to be diſcuſſed in a grand committee-meeting of our ſociety, convened at Danbury, for the expreſs purpoſe of judging whether every thing was properly managed; the whole proceedings appeared nothing but a chain of improprieties, and I therefore think it better to omit a deſcription which could only excite the painful duty of unfavourable criticiſm. Why ſhould I tell the publick that *we* determined that the marriage was too private; that the bride's cloaths were ill fancied, and ſat frightfully, or that the jewels laboured under the double diſadvantage of being *horridly* extravagant, and *odiouſly* unbecoming.

But one circumſtance as connected with the hiſtorical part of my preſent labours I muſt not omit. It was the extreme plainneſs of the dreſs, in which Miſs Dudley accompanied her ſiſter to the altar. Such meanneſs was ſo little conſiſtent with the other circumſtances of her character, that we found no difficulty

culty in attributing it to the moſt malignant envy. The ſagacity of this obſervation was confirmed by hearing, that inſtead of aſſiſting at the ceremonial viſitings, Louiſa and her father ſet out for their eſtate in Lancaſhire a few days after the nuptial ceremony. Such a want of attention to even common decorum, excited all our philanthropy, and in proportion as we hated the partial father, and his darling daughter, we wiſhed all imaginable happineſs to the poor young people, thus left to themſelves without any prudent friend to direct them in family management. Unſolicited, and prompted only by our natural generoſity, we reſolved to take upon ourſelves the *kind* office of general inquiſitors into the conduct of Mrs. Clermont's family, and we accordingly aſſumed the ſelf-inveſted character.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

The nuptial preſent of a Father.

AMONGST the arrangements preparatory to Mrs. Clermont's nuptials, it was determined that Mr. Dudley ſhould immediately reſign Stannadine to the young couple, for their reſidence; and Marianne acceded the more readily to her father's propoſal, becauſe ſhe had lately heard him expreſs an intention of accompanying Louiſa to her Lancaſhire eſtate that Autumn. It muſt be obſerved, that the train of thought in which the fair enthuſiaſt had hitherto indulged, did not ſupply the moſt accurate ideas reſpecting real life. Though educated to enjoy all the elegant comforts of affluence, ſhe did not know that competence was a bleſſing; and ſhe would perhaps have declaimed againſt the narrow, illiberal mind, that dared to reckon it amongſt the prime ingredients in the cup of

human happineſs. She had too great a ſoul to enquire what the value and extent of her ſiſter's eſtate was; ſhe had heard there was a cottage upon it, and that name ſuggeſted every thing that was paſtoral and charming. Nothing but the ſociety of her adored Clermont could have prevented her from envying the elegant retirement her father and ſiſter were going to enjoy. At parting ſhe repeated her injunctions to Louiſa, not to be ſo captivated with rural beauty, as to forget her promiſe of ſpending Chriſtmas at Stannadine, and in the interim ſhe was to be a punctual and diffuſe correſpondent. The charming ſcenes of artleſs nature could not fail to afford ample materials to a ſkilful hand; the tender attachments of the nymphs and ſwains would throw living figures into the landſcape; and who knows but ſome new Palemon might preſent himſelf, with taſte to ſelect, and virtue to reward the new Lavinia.

Louiſa,

Louiſa, with a penſive ſmile, wiſhed her ſiſter a long continuance of her preſent happineſs, while the ſtarting tear ſeemed to indicate that ſhe formed no very high idea of the rural felicity ſhe herſelf was going to enjoy.

While Mr. Dudley, the evening previous to his departure, repeated the bleſſing he firſt pronounced on conſigning his child to the protection of a huſband; prudence ſuggeſted a few ſalutary precepts. "May I always, my dear Marianne, ſee in your countenance this delightful appearance of heartfelt ſatisfaction! But in order to preſerve it, let me conjure you to baniſh from your heart that extreme ſenſibility you have hitherto cheriſhed."

"My dear Sir," cried the aſtoniſhed bride, "you adviſe me to diſmiſs the very faculty by which I know how to appreciate my preſent happineſs. I owe to it the exquiſite ſenſe I have of Mr. Clermont's unremitting tenderneſs. To this lively ſentiment I aſcribe the ineffable

delight

delight his preſence excites, and the refined tranſport which I feel at all his obſervant, aſſiduous attentions. My dear father, do not think I can ſurrender a quality, which has taken the deepeſt root in my ſoul."

"I perceive," ſaid Mr. Dudley, "that you are not yet a convert to my doctrines, that the lover and the huſband are different characters; yet as my opinion is warranted by long obſervation, you will I am certain be convinced at laſt: I hope not painfully. Much of your future happineſs, Marianne, depends upon yourſelf; do not at leaſt err through principle. Many duties are interwoven with the ſacred character which Mr. Clermont has lately aſſumed: he is no longer the enamoured youth, whom nothing unconnected with his fair Idol can intereſt; he is become the country gentleman, the neighbour, the landlord, the maſter of a family. With theſe obligations, though highly pleaſing to an intelligent mind, many irkſome duties are neceſſarily involved;

and

and when his temper is ruffled by any exterior perplexity, thoſe aſſiduous, obſervant attentions which you ſay are the ſource of your refined tranſports, muſt appear to him as a diſagreeable reſtraint. There is no part of the female character dearer to us men, than the idea that you are the ſoothers of our inquietudes, the ſolacers of our ſorrow, the ſympathizing friends to whom we may at all times retire for comfort, in every diſtreſs. The enthuſiaſm of youth often mingles with the addreſſes of the lover, an overſtrained ſubmiſſion which places your ſex in an exalted, but let me add in a falſe point of view. The huſband, when he reflects coolly upon every circumſtance, will, if he judges right, conſider it better to preſerve the heart he has gained, by diſplaying the manly qualities of ſenſe, philanthropy, integrity, and fortitude, than by the lover-like arts which his juvenile affection urged him to adopt; and the diſcreet wife will haſten to elevate her own character, by adding to the delicate tender-

tenderneſs of the bride, the dignified virtues of the matron."

"Exert the powers of your underſtanding, my dear child," continued he, tenderly preſſing her hand. "Even during the firſt fond period of wedded love, ſtrengthen the bonds by which you hold Mr. Clermont's heart, by diſplaying thoſe mental excellencies which will be ever new, and valuable when your perſon, your converſation, and your many fine accompliſhments, ſhall have loſt the gloſs of novelty. Providence, by placing you in an affluent ſituation, has impoſed upon you a thouſand motives for exerciſing a benevolent heart; and by making you as it were a mark of diſtinction, enjoins that nice propriety of conduct, by which if we cannot eſcape cenſure and ſorrow, we are at leaſt ſecure from the ſelf-reproach of having deſerved it. You are commanded to prepare yourſelf for a ſpiritual world, not to languiſh out life in luxurious ſoftneſs. You may, like yonder glorious Orb now ſinking in the

Weſt,

Weſt, ſpread comfort and delight all around you, and become a noble ſpectacle both to men and angels. And will you give up all theſe privileges, to place your whole of happineſs in the unremitting tenderneſs of a ſincere, amiable, well-intentioned, but undoubtedly of a fallible being. No, my child, ſummon your reſolution, and ere he changes the mode of behaviour his fondneſs has impoſed, do you imperceptibly releaſe him from the reſtraint. With pain I have heard you both declare, that you wiſh to ſhut out all the reſt of the world, and to live only to yourſelves. I muſt tell you that if this opinion was circulated, you would ſubject yourſelves to much opprobrium, not to ſay diſagreeable ridicule: but I will predict that your opinions will be changed before you are three months older."

Mrs. Clermont here interrupted her father. "You have formed your judgment, Sir, upon common attachments, and common marriages, and ſeem inclined to think that there are no exceptions from a general rule." "I

"I have formed my judgment," resumed Mr. Dudley, "upon my thorough knowledge of your character, and all I have seen of Mr. Clermont's; but I perceive my lecture wearies instead of convincing you. I will therefore conclude with two requests. I would wish to give them the efficacy of commands. In the first place, do not appear to avoid mixing in the society of your neighbours, and endeavour to engage Mr. Clermont in amusements, which will occasion frequent little absences. He will return to you with additional satisfaction, and your relish of each other's society will be improved, by the occasional interruptions company will give. My second request is, that you will study your husband's temper and character, with the deepest attention; in order that you may discover the peculiar tendency of those errors and prejudices, from which the best of us are not free, that by familiarizing them to your mind, they may steal upon you in the diminished form of little imper-

perfections. If you neglect to do this, you may perhaps firſt perceive them, at a moment when paſſion has encreaſed them beyond their uſual magnitude; and your alarmed imagination may ſtill further extend them, till they eclipſe their neighbouring virtues. Beſides, a wife's diſcretion may often guard her huſband from an error, by knowing the peculiar temptation to which he is moſt liable. I have now done, and this, my child, is the only legacy I can bequeath you."

Reflections of the moſt poignant nature agitated Mr. Dudley, as he ſpoke the laſt words; Mrs. Clermont with diſintereſted affection thanked him for the valuable gift, and after aſſuring him it was all ſhe wiſhed for, ſhe intreated him to conſider Louiſa as his *only* child in the diſpoſal of his fortune. She then obliged him to repeat his promiſe of viſiting Stannadine at Chriſtmas. "You will then, my dear father," ſaid ſhe, "ſee how I am improved by your precepts, and how far I am a convert to your opinion."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

An attempt at local deſcription. The Author ſees ſomething like an enchanted caſtle, in which ſhe immures a fair Arcadian.

THE aſylum which filial piety prepared for Mr. Dudley, was little calculated to baniſh from his memory the glowing fertility of the tropical iſlands; or the convenient elegance, with which well-regulated art had embelliſhed Stannadine. The moſt enthuſiaſtick imagination could hardly aſſociate paſtoral ideas with the neglected wildneſs of Seatondell, could ſuppoſe it peopled by Naids and Dryads, or fancy that Pan ever awoke its echoes with his tabor and pipe, while Cynthia and her maids of honour danced cotillions.

Little did Mr. Alderſon think when he bequeathed this eſtate to his grand-daughter, as a ſupply for pin money, that it would ſoon become her *only* permanent poſ-

ſeſſion.

ſeſſion. Much more improbable would it have appeared to his widow, could ſhe have foreſeen, when on her death-bed ſhe requeſted that her old dairy-maid, Mary Arby, might be permitted to end her days in the farm-houſe, which ſhe had for many years inhabited; that ſhe was providing a companion for the intelligent, accompliſhed Louiſa. But the viciſſitudes of fortune have often afforded copious themes for declamatory aſtoniſhment.

Though Mrs. Arby had anſwered Miſs Dudley's intimation of her deſign of coming to reſide upon the farm, with an aſſurance, that ſhe ſhould be proud to entertain young madam; ſhe certainly did not feel any *real* ſatisfaction in the idea, that ſhe was to be interrupted in the poſſeſſion of a place, over which ſhe had long reigned with paramount authority. Few young women, accuſtomed to the elegance of refined life, would have been inclined to diſturb her. The houſe was built at a period when the ſubſtantial and gloomy ſtyle of architecture, was pre-

ferred to the convenient and cheerful plan. Before the front was placed a little ſquare garden, ſurrounded by a cut hedge, and ſubdivided at right angles, by an ornamented fence of yew. Behind the houſe was an orchard, terminated by a rookery, the trees of which appeared at leaſt contemporary antiques with the dwelling they belonged to. On the left hand lay the farm-yard and out-houſes; and on the right the decayed village of Seatondell, many of whoſe inhabitants, allured by the ſuperior comforts which a large manufacturing town in the neighbourhood afforded, had deſerted their parental abodes. There now remained only a few opulent farmers, their labourers, and the curate of the pariſh; the latter of whom, after enjoying the mental luxury of literary converſation, in college ſociety, during the early part of his life, had been confined for many years, to the dry diſcuſſions of haughty, illiberal ignorance; and the painful

painful reflections of diſappointed hope. A pitiable, but not uncommon ſituation!

The arrival of the Dudleys in a poſt-chaiſe, was ſuch a novelty, that every inhabitant of Seatondell ran out of doors to gaze at the ſtrangers. Mrs. Arby, trembling alike with infirmity and apprehenſion, unbarred the maſſy porch door, and led them into an antique ſtone hall. Anxious properly to perform the honours of the houſe, ſhe attempted to place Mr. Dudley in the wicker arm chair, but unhappily in the hurry of politeneſs flung down a large flower-pot that decorated the open chimney, upon Louiſa's cloaths. That amiable girl, poſſeſſed of the true benevolence which can exert itſelf in trifling affairs, as well as upon important occaſions, diverted the good woman's concern for the accident, by kind enquiries after her health, and recollections of the early kindneſſes ſhe had received from her, when ſhe viſited at her grandmamma's in her childhood. By mentioning ſome articles of rural cookery, in

which Mrs. Arby uſed to excel, ſhe in a great degree reaſſured her trembling diffidence, and ſent her

"With diſpatchful looks in haſte,
"As one on hoſpitable thoughts intent,"

to make trial of her ſkill.

Miſs Dudley now addreſſed her father, who ſunk in the arm chair with his head reſting upon his hand, his liſtleſs, unobſervant eyes fixed on the immenſe ſtone window-frames, which ſeemed rather to exclude than to admit the day. The deepening ſhades of evening added to the gloomy appearance, and encreaſed the dejection of his too conſcious heart. "My dear ſir," ſaid Louiſa, "I find this place infinitely preferable to what I expected: a little paint and paper will enliven the houſe exceedingly, and when the yew ornaments are removed, I ſhall be delighted with gratifying my taſte for flowers in that neat little garden. We ſhall find both health and amuſement in improving our farm in ſummer, and in winter

winter books and muſick will afford a never-failing reſource from chagrin. My dear father, do reſume your wonted cheerfulneſs; you have often taught me reſignation, let not the preceptor need inſtruction from the pupil."

Mr. Dudley, after gazing upon his daughter for a few moments with a look of delighted affection, excuſed his want of ſpirits as ariſing from the fatigue he felt from their long journey. Louiſa hoped the depreſſion which ſhe alſo felt might be aſcribable to the ſame cauſe;—they ſeparated at an early hour.

Awakened by the clamour of the domeſtick poultry, Miſs Dudley roſe with the ſun, and opened the caſement of her chamber window, to take a view of the adjacent country. Her apartment fronted the orchard, a thick autumnal miſt hung upon the horizon, but had the morning been more favourable, the trees would have effectually impeded her deſign; for they were crowded together with a profuſion which entirely obſtructed

the ſight of any other object. She ſat down, liſtening to the murmur of a diſtant rivulet, which by a natural aſſociation of ideas, recalled to her memory a beautiful caſcade at Stannadine; near which ſhe firſt beheld Mr. Pelham, when introduced by her father in the character of Marianne's lover. There are moments in which the firmeſt ſpirits yield to the preſſure of calamity; and while Miſs Dudley recollected the happy hours ſhe had paſſed in the ſociety of that amiable man, a tear of involuntary regret, and a ſpontaneous ſigh, expreſſed how much ſhe felt the contraſt of her preſent ſituation.

She was rouſed from this reverie by the ſound of footſteps under her window, and looking out perceived her father, Mr. Dudley, after paſſing a reſtleſs night, had left his apartment, with the hope of diverting the reflections he knew not how to endure. His amiable daughter immediately baniſhed from her thoughts the indulgence of her own peculiar ſorrow,

and

and lifting her beautiful eyes to heaven, with meek ſolicitude implored the beneficent author of creation, to aſſiſt her endeavours to reſtore tranquillity and ſelf-ſatisfaction to one of the worthieſt of human hearts.

To give efficacy to her prayers, and to confirm her exalted principles by calling them into action, ſhe immediately joined her father, and with the winning ſweetneſs of which ſhe was abſolute miſtreſs, imperceptibly detached his thoughts from brooding upon irremediable misfortunes. She perſuaded him to walk round her little demeſne, and, with unfeigned tranſport, at length ſucceeded in reviving in his mind, that paſſion for agricultural improvement to which he was naturally inclined. A party of labourers were ſoon ſet to work, to prepare the ground for plantations, which were to be ſo diſpoſed, that ornament might unite with utility. Others were employed in clearing ſome waſte land, which could uſefully be converted into arable. A third ſet were

occupied in cleaning a large fiſh-pond, which through neglect had been nearly filled with earth, by which effort of induſtry Mr. Dudley propoſed the double advantage of draining a moraſs and furniſhing his table with an agreeable luxury. The orchard and garden underwent a complete metamorphoſis, about two thirds of the trees in the former were felled, and thus the chearful rays of the ſun were permitted to break in upon the green mouldering walls of the old manſion. The clipt hedge was in part removed, and a neat green paling ſubſtituted in its place, and the ornamental yew pillars were completely annihilated, to make room for a plantation of odoriferous ſhrubs. Theſe alterations involved the Dudleys in ſome ſerious diſputes with Mrs. Arby, who feeling all the local attachments age is apt to indulge, conſidered every object with which ſhe had long been familiar, with a ſort of ſacred regard. Even the gloom and damp which had hung for many years upon her

reſidence,

reſidence, ſeemed in her eyes a perfection, the loſs of which nothing *new* could ſupply.

Doubtleſs all the antiquated Dryads of Seatondell, if any ſuch there were, joined with Mrs. Arby in her regret, but amidſt the general devaſtation, a large White Roſe, which entirely overſhadowed the dairy-window, was preſerved with moſt religious care. A tender ſentiment was united to the uncommon beauty and fertility of the plant, to preſerve it from deſtruction, for it had been ſet by Mrs. Dudley in her childhood. Her affectionate and grateful daughter, while ſhe cleared it of its decaying branches, and with pious aſſiduity decorated the ſod from whence it grew with

"The rathe Primroſe that forſaken dies,
"The glowing Violet,
"With Cowſlips wan, that hang the penſive head,
"And ev'ry flow'r that ſad embroidery wears:"

MILTON'S LYCIDAS.

Indulged the pleaſing melancholy which a departed friend impreſſes upon the memory, when time has ſoftened the

agonies of grief into mild regret, and pious reſignation. The approach of winter had already begun to ſtrip the branches of the Roſe-buſh of their verdant honours; and Miſs Dudley's thoughts were naturally led from the ravages of the ſeaſon, to recollect the more terrible devaſtations of death. Her melancholy muſe expreſſed this idea in the following elegiack ſonnet:

TO A

ROSE-BUSH,

PLANTED BY A DECEASED FRIEND.

Rob'd in the mantle of luxuriant ſpring,
To thee the village-nymphs for chaplets ſue,
O'er thee the Bee extends his filmy wing,
Inhales thy ſweets, and drinks thy nectar'd dew:
From his high throne the flaming lord of day
Pours on thy burſting germs his fervid pow'r,
While Zephyr pleas'd amongſt thy leaves to play,
Caſts thy ſoft fragrance on each meaner flow'r:
Thy foliage ſhall again ſalute the ſkies,
Thou ſhalt not languiſh long in winter's gloom;
But lifeleſs ſtill thy honour'd planter lies,
The beams of ſummer cannot pierce the tomb:
Man, lord of all, beneath the reign of time,
Awaits perfection in a nobler clime.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Proving, that the creative power of the imagination may be employed in producing pleaſure, as well as pain.

THE ſuperior excellence with which Miſs Dudley adorned retirement, was not wholly confined to the duties of a daughter; her heart glowed with the pureſt flame of benevolence, nor could diſappointment obſcure, nor diſtreſs abſorb the ſacred radiance. The inhabitants of Seatondell certainly preſented no very alluring qualities to a poliſhed mind; but my heroine conſidering them in the light of fellow-creatures, diſcovered in the common nature ſhe ſhared with them, an unalienable claim upon her to diſcharge all the ſocial and charitable offices, which dependent and accountable man from "brother man requires." She was not reſtrained by obſerving that prejudice, malevolence, and calumny

prevailed even in this obſcure retreat. She conſidered theſe hateful paſſions as the natural characteriſticks of an ignorant mind and an unbridled temper, and ſhe even conceived it poſſible to counteract their baleful effects, by exhibiting the contrary virtues in the moſt amiable point of view. This hope was too romantick to be the *chief* motive which regulated her conduct, for ſhe principally looked forward to the approbation of her own conſcience, whoſe ſilent voice can beſt appreciate the effects of external circumſtances.

By the moſt engaging affability of look and manner, Louiſa conquered the diſlike her wealthy neighbours had conceived againſt her, and induced them to viſit the "fine lady," who was at firſt equally the object of their ridicule and abhorrence. My poor heroine ſoon perceived, that it would be a vain attempt, to diſcuſs any of the topicks of converſation of which ſhe was miſtreſs, and prudently aſſuming the learner, permitted her

her viſitants to lead the diſcourſe, and endeavoured to improve herſelf in the knowledge of local politicks, and rural œconomy. The matrons were all charmed by this modeſt humility; and the fair ruſtick belles perceiving nothing intimidating or haughty in her manner, endeavoured to acquire ſome hints reſpecting dreſs and behaviour, from the graceful ſtranger; and almoſt forgot their firſt idea, that ſhe was come on purpoſe to ridicule and eclipſe them.

Though Miſs Dudley, inſtead of ſucceeding in her well-meaning deſign, of healing the village animoſities, was forced to liſten to many a dull detail of wrongs and inſults; yet ſhe derived conſiderable advantages from the occaſional ſacrifice of an afternoon. She more clearly knew the value of candour and placability, by perceiving how neceſſary they were to tranquillity and ſelf-ſatisfaction. From a tedious unintereſting converſation ſhe returned with double avidity to her favourite amuſements; her books, her needle,

needle, her muſick, her garden, the ſociety of her beloved father, and thoſe active exertions of charity from which her limited purſe could not wholly reſtrain her. Accuſtomed to œconomick attentions, ſhe knew how to huſband her bounty, and by adding to it her perſonal ſervices to render a trifle valuable. She viſited the ſick, conſoled the afflicted, inſtructed the ignorant, and reproved the idle. She founded a village-ſchool, inſpected its management, and diſtributed its rewards. She was not diſcouraged by the murmurs of caprice, miſtake, or ingratitude, though they often interrupted her benevolent plans; for while her heart bore teſtimony to the rectitude of her intentions, it taught her to look for her reward in an approbation tranſcendently ſuperior to the changeful plaudits of variable man.

No part of her conduct appeared more deſerving of imitation than her behaviour to Mr. Walden, the unfortunate Clergyman whom I before mentioned. He had

long

long been expoſed to the ſupercilious neglect of oſtentatious wealth, or the rude inſults of conceited ignorance. Depreſſed by poverty, perplexed by the care of providing for a numerous family, and haraſſed by the unpleaſant temper of his wife; his mind ſunk under the preſſure of theſe accumulated evils, which his education had taught him to feel; and though he continued faithfully to diſcharge his miniſterial duties, he performed them with the mortified air of a ſelf-denying anchorite, inſtead of the cheerful ſatisfaction of the Chriſtian paſtor.

The Dudleys at their firſt arrival at Seatondell, conceived for him all the reſpect his character and ſacred function deſerved, and treated him with the moſt marked civility. Flattered by an attention to which he had been ſo little uſed, he endeavoured to revive his dejected ſpirits, and to recollect thoſe agreeable talents which had lain buried in oblivion. His attachment to thoſe who had recalled him to the ſenſe of pleaſure was extreme, and

his

his eager enjoyment of the long denied luxury of literary converſation led him frequently to their houſe; where ſolicitous to exhibit his mental acquirements, he anxiouſly ſought to engage Mr. Dudley or his daughter, upon ſome ingenious topick of diſcourſe. They were too candid to call this conduct by the harſh terms of intruſion, or pedantry. Louiſa felt happy at being able to give him a moment's reſpite from chagrin. Far from indulging a jeſt at the expence of his quaint ruſticity, or ſcholaſtick expreſſions; they excuſed his failings, pitied his misfortunes, and eſteemed his virtues.

Nor was Mrs. Arby exempt from the mild influence of Louiſa's excellencies. Happily blending the miſtreſs with the friend, and kindly allowing for the petulance and prejudice of age, ſhe ſoon taught the old woman to conſider the once dreaded arrival of her young lady as the greateſt bleſſing ſhe had known; and to join in the general applauſe, which in ſpite of a few malevolent detracters

was

was beſtowed upon ſuch exemplary conduct.

Thus increaſing the happineſs of all around her, was it poſſible for Miſs Dudley to be wretched? Could a liberal reflecting mind avoid partaking of the felicity it imparted; or at leaſt, enjoying the pure ſatisfaction ariſing from the conſciouſneſs of having acted right? Yet ſometimes, when alone, a tear would ſteal down her cheek. It was *not* called forth by recollecting the ſplendid eſtabliſhment Sir William Milton had once offered, for that ſhe had reſigned without the leaſt reluctance; but alas! Mr. Pelham was not quite forgotten, and his agreeable character appeared to greater advantage, when contraſted with the ſociety in which ſhe now ſuppoſed herſelf deſtined to ſpend her future life. Filial piety, fortitude, and female delicacy united to reſtrain the unavailing regret, and ſhe never met her father but with a ſmile indicative of the moſt heartfelt ſatisfaction.

Mr.

Mr. Dudley was *almoſt* perſuaded that the ruin of his daughter's fortune had not materially affected her happineſs, and the thought was a cordial to his depreſſed ſpirits. He looked forward indeed to Chriſtmas with anxiety, becauſe he intended while Louiſa was with her ſiſter to take a journey to London, and endeavour to collect the ſcattered remains of his fortune. In the mean time the hours did not paſs uncomfortably away. The unuſual mildneſs and ſerenity of the weather proved favourable to their rural occupations. The mornings were generally ſpent in the field, and the evenings enlivened by the peruſal of ſome approved author. Our immortal Shakſpeare held a diſtinguiſhed place amongſt them, and it is probable it was his animated deſcription of a winter, ſimilarly beautiful, which ſuggeſted to Miſs Dudley the following addreſs, to the one ſhe ſpent at Seatondell.

SONNET

SONNET TO WINTER.

Be crown'd with flow'rs, gay winter. From thy wing
Shake the round-moulded hail and flaky ſnow,
Bid from Aquarius' urn ſoft ſtreamlets flow,
And Piſces wanton in the warmth of ſpring:
Say to the ſhiv'ring Twins, no longer bring
Your tulips copy'd from th' aerial bow,
Or paint the Roſeate bud. Let tempeſts blow,
And o'er the wond'ring world my mantle fling:
For ſtill with Oberon Titania jars,
And ſtill the ſullen Queen indignant flies,
While Elfin ſquadrons who before theſe wars
Led the ſucceſſive ſeaſons down the ſkies,
Their charge deſerting, ſupplicate the ſtars
To heal the ills that from contention riſe.

CHAP. XXVI.

The dawn of Connubial Felicity, with a word or two on the pleaſure of tormenting.

MY two preceding chapters were peculiarly adapted for thoſe who feel the inconveniencies ariſing from depreſſed circumſtances, a diſagreeable ſituation, or an unpleaſant neighbourhood. It ſeemed a humane office to point out to them independent

dependent amuſements, and comforts abſolutely beyond the power of fortune. I now addreſs to the favourites of the fickle Goddeſs a few intimations, that they ſhould receive her bounty with gratitude, and uſe it with moderation; frequently comparing their ſituation with that of their neighbours, in order to induce them to meet with fortitude the little evils from which even the happieſt human beings cannot be exempt. With fortitude did I ſay, I want a term implying the moſt cheerful acquieſcence; for conſidering the calamities to which our nature is ſubject, the trivial vexations of life are beneath our regard.

It may be remembered, that Mrs. Clermont was left in the full poſſeſſion of all the bleſſings the moſt flattering imagination can conceive. No ſooner had her father and ſiſter left Stannadine, than the happy pair agreed to devote one fortnight to the uninterrupted pleaſure of each other's ſociety. The congratulatory cards were therefore anſwered, with a hint that they did

did not at preſent receive company, and an invitation to go and ſpend a week at the Park was reſpectfully deferred.

For the honour of wedded love it ſhall be mentioned, that they perſevered in this reſolution, though candour compells me to acknowledge, that before the expiration of *that* time, the hours moved upon leaden pinions. As every adventitious aid to converſation was rejected by mutual agreement, the invincible power and eternal durability of Love, though illuſtrated by their own example, ſeemed after frequent repetition but a vapid topick. Mr. Clermont with ſome degree of pleaſure recollected the amuſement his pencil afforded, and his fair bride was more than once tempted to look over her nuptial ornaments, and to appropriate her ſeveral dreſſes to different occaſions of grand diſplay.

Meanwhile Lady Clermont, who had *reluctantly* left a very "high-lived party" at Brighthelmſtone to be preſent at her ſon's nuptial, was dreadfully chagrined to be detained with her Lord for a longer

period

period than ſhe at firſt propoſed, and ſince decorum would not permit her to leave the country till the intended viſit was over, ſhe determined that her new daughter ſhould deeply feel the mortification of which ſhe had been the cauſe. It was not difficult for her Ladyſhip to endeavour to perſuade herſelf to diſlike a young woman, poſſeſſed of beauty, ſweetneſs, and elegance; it was a character to which ſhe could form no pretenſion, and naturally hated, becauſe it eclipſed her own. She received the bride with the hauteur of affected ſuperiority; her plebeian rank was conſidered by the high-born Lady Clermont as an indelible diſgrace; and her ignorance of the faſtidious niceties of etiquette which the great world requires, afforded an inexhauſtible fund of raillery, for one who had long conſidered *ſuch* knowledge to be the compendium of valuable ſcience.

Mrs. Clermont had been accuſtomed from her earlieſt infancy to unremitting tenderneſs, and ſhe was by nature peculiarly

ſuſceptible

ſuſceptible of unkind treatment, it therefore cannot be wonderful that the diſlike between the mother and daughter was reciprocal. But her Ladyſhip's temper was too violent to permit her to confine her's to her own boſom. She nurſed the deteſtable deſign of rendering her leſs amiable in the eyes of her impaſſioned huſband; and unreſtrained by the ſtrong impatience viſible in his countenance, whenever the idol of his ſoul was ſpoken of in terms ſhort of admiration, ſhe continued to point the moſt mortifying ſarcaſms againſt romantick attachments, and firſt impreſſions, mixing her obſervations with thoſe faint commendations of Marianne's beauty and ſimplicity, which might almoſt be termed implied cenſures.

Mr. Clermont's behaviour to his mother had always been diſtinguiſhed by reſpectful attention, in part ariſing from gratitude for the marked preference ſhe had ſhewn to him, and in part from pity at witneſſing the unkind neglect ſhe experienced from his father, and which had greatly contributed

to four a temper naturally unamiable. But his deference as a ſon was now put to a ſevere trial, and could ſcarcely reſiſt the ſtronger feelings of offended love.

One day, after having been particularly piqued by his mother's invidious obſervations, he haſtily retired to his wife's apartments, to loſe the painful recollection in her engaging ſweetneſs. He found her in tears. The tears of beauty are intereſting; its diſtreſſes inſpire the heart with the warmeſt reſentment; and Mr. Clermont had infinitely more of the Knight-errant in his character than generally falls to the lot of an huſband. He conjured her to diſcloſe the cauſe; his tender ſolicitude, while it gave her heart the livelieſt pleaſure, conſiderably increaſed her tears; for Mrs. Clermont had not yet adopted her father's advice, of aſpiring to that more exalted part of our ſex's character, which teaches us to ſhare in the ſorrows of our huſbands with magnanimity, and to teach them fortitude by our unobtruſive patience.

She was the "feeble vine," always clinging for ſupport to "her wedded elm."

Sobbing with diſtreſs, which ſeemed rather to proceed from weakneſs than from any real affliction, ſhe at length anſwered his importunities, by confeſſing that her tears proceeded from Lady Clermont's unkind behaviour. But when ſhe found that ſhe had excited a tempeſt which all her ſkill could not allay, ſhe deeply regretted the imprudent diſcovery. Mr. Clermont burſt from her in a rage, and haſtened to his mother. A moſt violent altercation enſued between them, in which they mutually ſeemed to forget what was due to the ſacred ties of blood. Lord Clermont's authority, and the gentle mediation of his daughter, produced an *apparent* reconciliation; but the ſeeds of diſguſt were deeply ſown, and in their final effect were ruinous to Mr. Clermont's peace.

During the remainder of the viſit, her Ladyſhip behaved to the bride with ceremonious coolneſs and affected reſpect.

This behaviour, though leſs reprehenſible than the former, was equally painful to a candid ingenuous mind. Marianne deeply reflected upon the preceding events, and though there was nothing in her huſband's behaviour which could be conſtrued into an implied cenſure upon her conduct; her conſcious heart told her it had not been worthy his eſteem. She had been apprized of Lady Clermont's bad temper, and the little influence ſhe poſſeſſed in her family was publickly known. It was abſurd to expect to be exempt from the general influence of conſtitutional ill-humour, and cruel to degrade and expoſe an unhappy woman; who already laboured under the ſevere affliction of a huſband's contempt.

On diſcovering her paſt indiſcretion, Mrs. Clermont fell into an error not uncommon to a generous ſuſceptible heart. Prompted by a keen ſenſe of her fault, ſhe determined to apply to Lady Clermont for forgiveneſs; and had the application been made with prudence, or had

had the perſon to whom it was addreſſed, poſſeſſed but half the generoſity of herſelf, the moſt happy effects might have been produced. But in the letter ſhe wrote (for ſhe had not courage to name her offence in converſation) ſhe proportioned her conceſſions rather to the acuteneſs of her own feelings, than to the enormity of the fault, which was in reality nothing more than an irritable ſenſe of undeſerved provocations. This letter afforded the malevolent Lady Clermont the livelieſt ſatisfaction. It convinced her of her power to diſtreſs a placable ſuſceptible mind, and ſhe preſerved it with care, to be produced as an uncontrovertible evidence againſt her daughter, on any future occaſion. Her reply was dictated by great apparent kindneſs, and oſtentatious urbanity.

CHAP. XXVII.

A fête champêtre. Exceſſive tenderneſs is ſometimes troubleſome.

SOON after the Clermonts returned to Stannadine, the congratulatory viſitings commenced. Our ſociety was unuſually animated, by the exhilarating entertainment of anecdote and obſervation which this circumſtance ſupplied. As I have already anticipated the general concluſions, and hate repetitions, I ſhall haſten to the deſcription of a grand fête, given by Mr. Clermont, to the inhabitants of Danbury; for in compliance with his father's wiſhes, he had formed a parliamentary deſign upon our ancient reſpectable borough.

The entertainment conſiſted of a ball, and ſupper, given in the gardens; in which ſuch of the company who choſe, might appear in an aſſumed character. The bride arranged the plan of the entertainment,

tainment, and perhaps felt a ſecret pleaſure, that the ſuperior elegance of her taſte had now an opportunity of publickly diſplaying itſelf. Every ornament was perfectly rural, and the whole proceedings were adjuſted with paſtoral ſimplicity. In the attire of Calypſo ſhe preſided as miſtreſs of the feaſt, and welcomed her gueſts to her bower with an air of inimitable ſweetneſs. Her Ulyſſes hung with enamoured eyes upon his fair enchantreſs, and forgot his father's ſenatorial projects. Unlike his old archetype, who only remembered Ithaca, even when firſt infatuated by the Queen of Ogygia.

The company afforded a great diſplay of character, but not all ſtrictly claſſical. Captain Target, with his head dreſſed a la Pigeon, a chapeau under his arm, and a ſword, exhibited a tolerable *modern* Mars. Miſs Cardamum happily returned from Scarborough in time for this feſtivity; rich in polite anecdote, and gayly decorated by faſhion. She treated us with a very lively Diana, in a pink ſarſenet

jacket: while Miſs Dolly Medium diſplayed as happy an imitation of Venus, in a white frock altered into a Grecian ſymar for the occaſion. For my own part, I was contented with the ſimple, unambitious character of a ſhepherdeſs, and put myſelf to no further expence than a few blue ribbands, with which I metamorphoſed my walking cane into a crook.

I thought the evening extremely agreeable, and returned home perfectly ſatisfied; but my unfortunate facility in being pleaſed, expoſes me to many inconveniencies, and frequently obliges me to retract the applauſe which is controverted by better judges. It was determined in full conſiſtory, that the lights were ill-diſpoſed, the ornaments childiſh, the refreſhments parſimoniouſly ſupplied, and the bride and bridegroom viſibly too much attached to each other, to pay proper attention to their friends. But what was moſt lamentable, ſo little regard had been paid to proper arrangement, with

reſpect

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As theſe obſervations were not whiſpered in cloſets, they were detailed to Mrs. Patty, when ſhe paid an *extraordinary* viſit to Miſs Lappel's in order to learn what was ſaid of the entertainment. As in the opinion of the ſanguine Abigail, it had been a compleat piece of perfection; ſhe had anticipated the high encomiums

CHAP. XXVII.

A fête champêtre. Exceſſive tenderneſs is ſometimes troubleſome.

SOON after the Clermonts returned to Stannadine, the congratulatory viſitings commenced. Our ſociety was unuſually animated, by the exhilarating entertainment of anecdote and obſervation which this circumſtance ſupplied. As I have already anticipated the general concluſions, and hate repetitions, I ſhall haſten to the deſcription of a grand fête, given by Mr. Clermont, to the inhabitants of Danbury; for in compliance with his father's wiſhes, he had formed a parliamentary deſign upon our ancient reſpectable borough.

The entertainment conſiſted of a ball, and ſupper, given in the gardens; in which ſuch of the company who choſe, might appear in an aſſumed character. The bride arranged the plan of the entertainment,

tainment, and perhaps felt a ſecret pleaſure, that the ſuperior elegance of her taſte had now an opportunity of publickly diſplaying itſelf. Every ornament was perfectly rural, and the whole proceedings were adjuſted with paſtoral ſimplicity. In the attire of Calypſo ſhe preſided as miſtreſs of the feaſt, and welcomed her gueſts to her bower with an air of inimitable ſweetneſs. Her Ulyſſes hung with enamoured eyes upon his fair enchantreſs, and forgot his father's ſenatorial projects. Unlike his old archetype, who only remembered Ithaca, even when firſt infatuated by the Queen of Ogygia.

The company afforded a great diſplay of character, but not all ſtrictly claſſical. Captain Target, with his head dreſſed a la Pigeon, a chapeau under his arm, and a ſword, exhibited a tolerable *modern* Mars. Miſs Cardamum happily returned from Scarborough in time for this feſtivity; rich in polite anecdote, and gayly decorated by faſhion. She treated us with a very lively Diana, in a pink ſarſenet

jacket: while Miſs Dolly Medium diſplayed as happy an imitation of Venus, in a white frock altered into a Grecian ſymar for the occaſion. For my own part, I was contented with the ſimple, unambitious character of a ſhepherdeſs, and put myſelf to no further expence than a few blue ribbands, with which I metamorphoſed my walking cane into a crook.

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which would be paſſed upon her lady; and by implication upon herſelf, as a moſt able aſſiſtant in producing the happy effect. Judge then of her aſtoniſhment to find it had been voted an abſolute *bore*. Mrs. Patty's tongue was not deficient in the grace of volubility, and ſhe certainly poured upon the calumniators a torrent of what might be termed retributive abuſe; but when we expect a panegyrick upon *ourſelves*, to meet only an opportunity of abuſing *others*, is certainly a mortification. I can compare it to nothing but what a Roman general muſt feel, who was only permitted an ovation, when he expected a triumph.

Patty's anger was too violent to evaporate in defamation at Miſs Lappel's, and ſhe ſeized the firſt opportunity to inform her lady what her enemies ſaid of her. Whenever my fair readers are threatened with a ſimilar communication, I will entreat them, for the ſake of their future peace of mind, to repreſs the imprudence of riſing curioſity, and to ſilence

the

the injudicious or perhaps malevolent informer. Mrs. Clermont did not exert this uſeful ſelf-command, and Patty was too fond of uſing the acid in her mental ſtimulants, to adhere rigidly to truth. She *aggravated* therefore the *aggravations* which Miſs Lappel, through her indignation at the ill uſage of ſo good a cuſtomer, had already ſupplied; and thus the Danbury critique upon Mrs. Clermont's fête champêtre became at laſt a moſt highly coloured lampoon; capable of agitating a firmer mind than the fair entertainer poſſeſſed. How extremely hard it was to be diſappointed, in her firſt attempt at gaining popularity. To be ſo *unexpectedly* diſappointed too, rendered it ſtill more provoking; for every one of her gueſts had declared themſelves quite enchanted during the whole evening. One ſatisfaction ſtill remained, the ſympathy of an affectionate huſband. She had made the entertainment on purpoſe to oblige him, and doubtleſs he would warmly eſpouſe her cauſe againſt a male-

volent *world*. Her quarrel indeed was only with a very ſmall part of the univerſe; but injured people are fond of uſing indefinite terms.

It was at an inauſpicious moment that Marianne flew to impart to her dear protector, the cruel injuries ſhe had received. Mr. Clermont had employed the whole morning in attempting to ſketch a likeneſs of the ſweet Calypſo, who had ſo enchanted him a few evenings before. After many unſucceſsful attempts, he at laſt executed a very promiſing outline; but whilſt he was bending over it, with the mingled exultation of an artiſt and a lover, a favourite ſpaniel ruſhed into the room, and in its ecſtacy at the ſight of his maſter, leaped upon the pallet, and entirely obliterated the unfortunate performance.

Mr. Clermont had ever borne his father's peremptory behaviour, and his mother's caprice with ſubmiſſion and deference. But the mandates of his Lordſhip iſſued in the compulſatory tone of

of a deſpotick monarch, and received with ſilent awe, were not calculated to eradicate any evil propenſity, nor to inculcate any generous virtue. Fortunately his ſon had received from nature an amiable, affectionate diſpoſition; and his uncorrupted mind, elevated by a fertile imagination, and the ſtrong enthuſiaſm of early youth, gave a romantick, but engaging turn to his character. From nature *too* he received as foils to his virtues, impetuous paſſions, and vehemence of temper; and theſe errors no paternal *precept* taught him to ſubdue; nor did the yet ſurer rule of paternal *example* inculcate the important duty of ſelf command. The reſtraint which the preſence of his parents impoſed, was temporary, and his violence was ſtill more apparent when that curb was removed.

On opening the door of the library, Mrs. Clermont ſurprized her huſband in the firſt paroxyſms of anger; correcting the trembling dog. Though her preſence had always uſed to harmonize his ſoul,

it rather added to his vexation on this occaſion. He wiſhed to have concealed from his Marianne every defect in his own diſpoſition. He felt the reſentment which riſes in the mind of perſons conſcious of error; a reſentment at firſt extremely apt to fall upon thoſe who happen to witneſs the fault, inſtead of pointing the reproof to their own boſoms. To her terrified enquiries as to the cauſe of his violence, he remained for ſome time ſilent, and at laſt *complained* that ſhe had interrupted him, when he was moſt particularly engaged. Mrs. Clermont immediately withdrew. Her ſpirits had been previouſly agitated by Patty's goſſiping communications; this was the firſt time ſhe had ever ſeen the "God of her Idolatry" in a light that obſcured his ſuppoſed divinity. What a diſcovery for one who meaſured the virtues and the vices by a gigantick ſtandard! She reached her dreſſing-room, and ſinking into a chair, fell into ſtrong hyſtericks.

Her

Her ſcreams inſtantly alarmed her family, and Mr. Clermont was the firſt to fly to her aſſiſtance. His heart was candid and affectionate, and ſoon penetrated by remorſe. He had corrected his dog for obliterating the portrait; but he had himſelf cruelly diſcompoſed the charming original. In the lively pangs of compunction, he flung himſelf at her feet; terrified at the apprehenſion of her danger, he implored her forgiveneſs, and ſtyled himſelf the baſeſt of villains. No pungent aromatick could boaſt the reviving power which his voice poſſeſſed; his gentle bride with ſobbing tenderneſs, aſſured him of her forgiveneſs, but her delicate frame had been too much affected by the acuteneſs of her ſenſibility, immediately to recover from the ſhock it had received. Mr. Clermont attended her with the moſt watchful ſolicitude; intreaties for pardon, and aſſurances that it had been long ago granted, were repeated every minute; and if this unlucky incident could be termed the quarrel of lovers,

it

it certainly confirmed the proverb, by proving the "renewal of love."

The lady's indiſpoſition neceſſarily obliged ſome of the ſervants to be preſent during the eclairciſſement; and as uneducated minds are ever apt to ſuſpect more than they know, and to exaggerate what they really ſee, the circumſtance was ſoon publiſhed, in a manner not very favourable to the wedded pair. My ſagacious neighbours entered deeply into the diſpute, and ſeemed willing to allow Mr. Clermont entire poſſeſſion of the epithet of "baſeſt of villains," which he had been pleaſed to affix to his own character. Indeed general report brought no inſtance to confirm this *unqualified* abuſe; but will candour permit us to queſtion the veracity of voluntary confeſſion. Our inquiſitors-general, after bitterly inveighing againſt the guilt of hypocriſy in a young perſon, reſolved upon a *permanent ſitting* to diſcover the latent depravity, which they were certain muſt exiſt. And they executed this taſk with a degree of watchfulneſs,

fulneſs, that would have done honour to Argus himſelf; who perhaps was the mythological emblem of our ſiſterhood.

CHAP. XXVIII.

In wedlock, characters may be too ſimilar to produce harmony. This axiom is proved by a well-fought battle between female weakneſs, and male folly.

WHILE pity ſang the plaintive dirge over the misfortunes of "poor Mrs. Clermont," that lady had entirely recovered from her indiſpoſition; and fully confiding in her huſband's aſſurance, that ſhe ſhould never behold the *ſmalleſt* error in his temper and conduct again, ſhe yielded to the tranſporting reflections which the expected arrival of her dear Eliza Milton had excited. Several months had elapſed ſince the friends had enjoyed the gratification of a perſonal intercourſe, and though the important events which had taken place in that period had been deſcribed

deſcribed by a very diffuſe pen; yet, many circumſtances would admit of further amplification, in which art both ladies were adepts.

As I cannot conceive that it could be from the want of a proper reliſh for the beauties of female converſation, that Mr. Clermont was not conſtantly of the party, I will aſcribe his abſence to his commendable wiſh to gratify the fair friends with opportunities of indulging the confidence they ſo highly reliſhed. Delicacies are apt to ſatiate the appetite, and to produce ſuch a whimſical craving after novelty, as to render the coarſeſt food palatable. The moſt luxurious Epicures ſometimes preſcribe to themſelves abſtinence, in order to excite the greater reliſh for an expected dainty. Judging by theſe rules, Mr. Clermont invited a party of young friends to Stannadine, very ſoon after Miſs Milton's arrival. They had all been his companions at ſchool as well as at College, and their ſociety had been productive of a thouſand pleaſures, before

deſpotick

deſpotick love became the "maſter paſſion in his breaſt," and "ſwallowed up" every competitor.

The foils who were thus introduced as a contraſt to female *ſoftneſs* were men of fortune, animated by youth and lively ſpirits; and exceedingly diſpoſed to enjoy themſelves with their old friend. They beheld his happineſs with that ſort of good-humoured envy, which warm admiration is apt to inſpire, and which, though it deſires as fortunate a lot for itſelf, has no malevolent wiſh to leſſen the felicity of another. "Where did you meet with ſuch an angel, Clermont?" was the general exclamation; and the epithets "Lucky dog," and "Happy fellow," were interpreted by many hearty ſhakes of the hand, and wiſhes of long life and uninterrupted harmony. I could here moralize upon the inſtability of human wiſhes.

The young gentlemen were all paſſionately fond of field ſports; it was the ſeaſon for enjoying them, and the ſurrounding country

country was favourable to their deſires. The reſtleſs humour of their ſex ſoon made them weary of ſedentary amuſements, one propoſed hunting, another ſhooting, a third courſing; but Mrs. Clermont's tender diſpoſition ſupplied her with very ſtrong objections to all the three diverſions, and ſhe looked with ſo much horror upon the cruel nature of theſe ſports, as almoſt to deteſt thoſe who practiſed them. She defended the cauſe of the dumb creation, with all the irreſiſtible graces of plaintive oratory; and as her inſinuating countenance, no leſs than her words, was peculiarly adapted to ſoften the hearts of her opponents, the majority ſeemed more than half convinced, and inclined to give up their darling purſuit. But one of the young Acteons, (by name Aubrey,) poſſeſſing more humour than implicit deference, encountered the fair pleader with a great ſhare of agreeable vivacity, at the moment that her triumph was going to be acknowledged. He gayly aſcribed the commiſeration the

ladies

ladies generally expreſſed for the ſufferings of animals of chaſe, to ſympathy, ariſing from the recollection of their own terrors, while expoſed to the perſecutions of the grand *purſuer* man. He cautioned them againſt the dangerous, though generous deſign, of diverting the *whole* attention of that miſchievous creature from other objects of prey, to themſelves; and he illuſtrated his argument with ſo many whimſical ideas, that a loud laugh announced his victory. Neither Mrs. Clermont, nor her echo Miſs Milton, dared to oppoſe their lively antagoniſt, and a ſhooting party was fixed for the next morning, to which Mr. Clermont was prevailed on to accede, though he had in reality no reliſh for the ſport.

The company had no ſooner retired than Mrs. Clermont began to exert her influence, to detach her huſband from what ſhe termed an *inhuman* diverſion. Certainly ſhooting could appear no better, when her lively imagination had embelliſhed the terror of the poor birds which had

had eſcaped, the miſery of ſuch as were wounded, the anguiſh of the dying, and the grief of the ſurvivors. Mr. Clermont heartily wiſhed he could have retracted his promiſe; but as it had been given, thought he muſt adhere to it. His lady had now a new cauſe for diſſuaſion. Accidents often happened with guns, and as nothing but his ſtaying at home would pacify her, he at length acquieſced; but ſo unwillingly, that he ſpent the remainder of the night in anticipating the aukward appearance he ſhould make to his expecting friends in the morning. This apprehenſion was not ill-founded; the apologies he had framed were too jejune to be admitted; the real cauſe of his abſenting himſelf was inſtantly gueſſed, and a loud laugh excited; which Mr. Clermont affected to parry with great bravery.

A jeſt upon the ſubject of female uſurpation is dreadfully grating to lordly man, and it is peculiarly ſo when (as in the preſent inſtance) it happens to apply.

Mr.

Mr. Clermont declined his lady's invitation to breakfaſt, and as ſoon as his friends had ſet off, retired to his library, and there continued to pace the room with deſultory ſteps; frequently imagining he had caught a glimpſe of the chains which Hymen is *ſuſpected* to wear under his long ſaffron mantle.

Reſpecting the real exiſtence of theſe ſaid chains, I, as an old maid, muſt not be allowed to give any decided opinion; but as the very apprehenſion of them has been known to drive many of the "Lords of the creation" frantick, I conſtantly adviſe my newly-married friends to endeavour as much as poſſible to divert their huſband's attention from this terrible bugbear. I intreat them to hold the reins of government, (if by great chance committed to their hands,) with circumſpect propriety, and to ſurrender them the moment that the poſſeſſion of them becomes diſputed.

Dinner ſummoned the party again together. The young ſportſmen, delighted with

with the pleaſures they had enjoyed, were in moſt excellent ſpirits; but the fretful vexation which appeared in Mr. Clermont's look and manner effectually ſuppreſſed the indulgence of genuine mirth. A forced converſation was faintly ſupported, and the ladies ſoon withdrew. The bottle then began more freely to circulate, and Mr. Clermont's chagrin was not proof to the general hilarity it inſpired. Old ſchool exploits were then recollected with infinite ſatisfaction, and the claſſical enjoyments which College had produced, loſt none of their attick zeſt by repetition. In ſhort, mirth and good-humour were completely re-eſtabliſhed in the dining-room.

Mrs. Clermont was in the mean time indulging in a luxury, of which I would preſcribe a moſt temperate uſe to all young wives: I mean the dangerous pleaſure of unreſerved confidence, with what is termed a *boſom* friend. The ruin of wedded peace may often be aſcribed to ſuch injudicious communications. To what

purpoſe is it to talk over an huſband's errors, or the little vexations which may be caſually endured from him, unleſs to quicken our ſenſibility, to keep our minds and our tempers in a painful irritable ſtate, and to prevent that happy forgetfulneſs which is in many inſtances the greateſt bleſſing we can enjoy?

Mr. Clermont's ill-humour was too apparent to eſcape Miſs Milton's obſervation, and Marianne's ſtreaming tears evinced her painful ſenſe of it. Encouraged by the pleaſing ſympathy of her friend, ſhe indiſcreetly related every little incident which had before occurred of a diſagreeable nature; and the adventure in the library was largely diſcuſſed, together with Mr. Clermont's anxiety at her illneſs, and his ſolemn promiſes of never again giving way to ill-humour. Inſtead of conſidering a breach of that engagement as a conſtitutional defect, or a tranſient forgetfulneſs, and therefore but a venial error, Miſs Milton aggravated it into wanton perjury, and conſummate cruelty.

cruelty. She had no malevolent deſign in ſo doing, but ſhe had never made any obſervations upon real life; and Mr. Clermont's preſent behaviour was certainly very oppoſite to the perfect excellence and perfect felicity which exiſts in the land of Hymen; as deſcribed in the Utopian geography of many modern noveliſts.

"Ah, my deareſt Marianne," cried the affectionate but imprudent Miſs Milton, "are you indeed united to a lordly ſpirit, inſenſible of the value of your lovely tenderneſs, your charming ſenſibility? I obſerved you at table, and felt aſtoniſhed that Mr. Clermont could reſiſt the ſoft complaining anguiſh that appeared in your countenance. Hark!—No I am not miſtaken, the gentlemen are extremely lively now. They can enjoy themſelves as ſoon as the reſtraint which we impoſed is removed. Good Heaven! and have I lived to ſee my Marianne an impediment to her huſband's happineſs?"

"My

"My father's cautions," reſumed Mrs. Clermont, "pointed out to me all theſe evils, but I did hope that Mr. Clermont would prove an exception to the general rule. Too plainly do I diſcover that my ſociety has loſt its wonted faſcination. Alas my heart will ever be unalterably his, even if he continues to treat me injuriouſly."

Here a ſudden interruption prevented her from proceeding, and gives me an opportunity of cloſing my chapter.

CHAP. XXIX.

The conſequences of a confidant's interference, when unreſtrained by diſcretion.

MR. Clermont and his friends roſe from table in high ſpirits, and proceeded to the drawing-room in the gay hope of ſpending a pleaſant evening. The firſt object they beheld was Mrs. Clermont riſing from the ſopha, and looſening her

hands from Miſs Milton's; her eyes red and ſwoln, and her cheek wet with tears.

Confuſed, ſurpriſed, and perhaps ſecretly aſhamed of a weakneſs ſhe had not time to conceal, ſhe could only anſwer the general enquiry of what was the matter, with a complaint of indiſpoſition; and ſeizing her friend's arm, hurried to her apartment. Mr. Clermont followed, full of real anxiety, but when he tenderly enquired into the nature of her complaint, ſhe only anſwered him with a ſoft ſigh, and a requeſt that he would not diſtreſs her.

Lady G. (in Sir Charles Grandiſon) complains, that mediators and mediatrixes had extended her whimſical diſputes with her lord, and given them a more ſerious aſpect than ſhe deſigned. There can be no doubt that the preſent fracas between our young people would have terminated as eaſily as the laſt, if Miſs Milton had not been ſeized with the warm Knight-errantry of friendſhip. Conceiving that the timid Marianne wanted an orator to

open

open her cauſe, ſhe informed Mr. Clermont that his wife's uneaſineſs had proceeded frem his evident ill-humour, and ſhe requeſted him to conſider what kind of treatment gentleneſs and ſenſibility required.

To borrow a phraſe from the vocabulary of Bacchus, Mr. Clermont was a little elevated, and conſequently felt the high dignity of man too warmly to ſubmit to reproof. "Does Mrs. Clermont, Madam," ſaid he, "appoint you the judge of my behaviour?" Then turning to his Lady, he deſired her for her *own* ſake to behave with more propriety, and then humming a favourite tune, he rejoined his companions.

Neither my hero nor my heroine were models of prudence. Mr. Clermont's renewed vexation was ſtrongly written in his face, and he was too much agitated to evade his friends' enquiries. They were quite in a diſpoſition to enjoy *fun*, without retaining ſufficient judgment to diſtinguiſh humour from miſchief. A grand

rebellion againſt female influence was reſolved upon, and as ſuch projects always ſucceed beſt when reaſon is entirely baniſhed, they all determined to ſpend the evening in high jollity; and to call in Champaign and Burgundy as glorious auxiliaries, for the ſupporting of male authority, and for humbling a wife's ſpirit.

As Mr. Clermont's heart, in ſpite of his reſentment, could not be wholly alienated from his Marianne, he was the firſt to quicken the circulation of the glaſs, in order to ſilence the reproaches which he could not endure. The hours of night flew rapidly away, enlivened by what the gentlemen called Anacreontick ſallies. About twelve o'clock, Mrs. Clermont diſpatched a requeſt to ſpeak with her huſband; but the general voice choruſed his anſwer, that he was particularly engaged, and could not leave his party till the morning.

If the gay Bacchanalians perceived the "broad pinions of time ſwifter than the wind;"

wind;" to poor Mrs. Clermont he appeared "to creep decrepid with old age." Unkindneſs muſt ever fall with ſevereſt weight on thoſe who have ever been accuſtomed to extreme indulgence. Miſs Milton's interpoſition had indeed been able to aggravate a trivial vexation into a real ſorrow, but it was utterly incapable of healing the anguiſh a tender mind endured, while labouring under the *known* diſpleaſure of a beloved huſband.

Mrs. Clermont flung herſelf upon the bed, pretending ſleepineſs, but in reality to eſcape from the impertinence of conſolation: which adminiſtered no relief to her agonized heart. Her anxious friend inſiſted upon watching her ſlumbers, and poſitively refuſed to quit her chamber. This fond attention, contraſted with Mr. Clermont's cruel neglect, rendered the latter but more apparent, and fixed another dagger in Marianne's breaſt. Beſides, her faithful Patty believing her lady to be aſleep, began a converſation in audible

whiſpers with Miſs Milton, of which the following was the prefatory ſpeech.

"Pray, Madam, what can be the matter between my maſter and my lady? though I always thought they would ſoon fall out, for Miſs Lappel has told me, that all the people in Danbury ſay, Mr. Clermont is the greateſt villain in the world."

"Huſh," ſaid Miſs Milton, "ſo I am afraid; but don't let your lady hear you for the world."

"O," replied Patty, "ſhe is faſt aſleep. 'Tis a ſhocking thing, Madam, that ſhe ſhould be *ſo* married. The ſweeteſt, beſt tempered creature in the world."

"It is indeed a fatal engagement," ſaid Mrs. Clermont to herſelf, but her deſire to hear more kept her ſilent.

"Pray, Mrs. Patty, do you know how this match was brought about?" enquired Miſs Milton.

"It was my old Lord's doings, Madam. To be ſure there muſt be a fate in theſe things. Perhaps they wanted money at the Park; but I think it was not ſo neither.

neither. Mr. Clermont never let my lady have any reſt; teaze, teaze; but ſuch hot love is generally ſoon cold, as the ſaying is."

"Not always ſo," returned Miſs Milton, "but only with ſuch ungrateful wretches as he."

"Wretches indeed, Madam. Well, to be ſure, you only ſay what all the world does of him."

Here Mrs. Clermont's agony could no longer be ſuppreſſed. She fell into violent fits, and it was at this period that the meſſage was ſent to Mr. Clermont, and the anſwer returned, which I have before ſtated. The footman was again diſpatched to ſay that his lady was extremely ill; but he judging his maſter's preſence, in the ſtate he then was, could afford no conſolation, brought for anſwer that Mr. Clermont was extremely ſorry, but really was unable to attend her.

CHAP. XXX.

Human paſſions, like the ſea, vary from tempeſts to ſullen calms.

THE night paſſed in ſcenes of diſtraction; I ſhall now uſher in the morning.

Mrs. Clermont, exhauſted by her ſtrong emotions, ſunk into a ſlumber, in which ſhe had continued a few hours, when Mr. Clermont and his friends awoke. A confuſed recollection of what had paſſed, mingled with much ſecret compunction; for the delights of intemperance will never ſtand the teſt of returning reaſon.

The viſitants, on being informed that Mrs. Clermont was exceedingly indiſpoſed, judged that their remaining longer at Stannadine would be a great impropriety; and deſirous to remedy as far as poſſible the evil they had cauſed, at taking leave of Mr. Clermont, ſtrongly urged him to an immediate reconciliation with his lady. Shocked at the idea that the world ſhould know

know that he and his beloved Marianne were at variance, he ſat agitated by the moſt ſenſible regret, which his friends ſtrove to diminiſh, by ſoftening his offence into a *venial* failing.

The moment their carriages drove off, Mr. Clermont went into his wife's apartment; but not with that lively tranſport which is expreſſive of the happy huſband. She had juſt riſen from her bed, and did I indulge myſelf in the uſe of ſimiles, I might now juſtly apply the trite one, of a broken lily wet with rain. Her pale, dejected aſpect, heightened in Mr. Clermont's mind the tender ſenſibility which reſentment and inebriety had obſcured: he folded her in his arms, and with impaſſioned agony beſought her to forgive him. Mrs. Clermont aſſured him that ſhe did, but her averted eye, and half-ſtifled ſobs, gave no pleaſing confirmation to her words.

Mr. Clermont walked to the window mortified and dejected. Undoubtedly he was too arrogant in expecting his recent

provocations could be immediately forgotten, and himſelf received with a complacent ſmile. I am, however, afraid that the generality of huſbands, from the high idea they entertain of their own ſuperiority, would be apt to think a wife very capricious who ſhould retain her reſentment after they have made the *ſlighteſt* conceſſion. Men are remarkably tenacious of their opinions, and ſince protracting a domeſtick quarrel muſt always be at the hazard of future happineſs, I muſt adviſe my ſex to be "eaſily entreated." I can aſſure them that a placid ſmile will convey a very forcible reproof to a generous heart conſcious of error, and that forgiveneſs is not the *leſs* valuable becauſe it is cheerfully beſtowed.

After a moment's heſitation, Mr. Clermont determined upon another effort; "You have been ill, my dear," ſaid he, "I hope you are better." A faint affirmative was the only reply. "I conjure you, Marianne, by all our former happineſs, do not treat me with indifference.

I feel

I feel more compunction than I can expreſs when I recollect the paſt; but let this acknowledgment ſuffice. Baniſh the events of yeſterday from your remembrance. Give me your hand, and promiſe to think of them no more. She coldly gave her hand, and with a forced ſmile uttered the deſired promiſe.

Though it would be very entertaining to a profeſſed goſſip, to follow our young couple's proceedings in a journal-like narrative, the apprehenſion of not meeting with the congenial ſoul of a ſiſter-goſſip in my readers, impoſes brevity. The Clermonts continued to behave to each other for ſome weeks with civility inſtead of tenderneſs, and with attention inſtead of confidence and harmony. The converſation ſhe had overheard between Miſs Milton and Patty, cruelly agitated *her* mind, and induced her to view all her huſband's actions with the aſkance eye of ſuſpicion; while her knowledge of the violence of his temper impoſed a ſort of terrified compliance. Mr. Clermont on

the contrary, attributed his Marianne's melancholy reſerve to an implacable diſpoſition, and feeling unwilling to gratify her pride by any further ſubmiſſion, he permitted his attachment for his once adored idol inſenſibly to decline.

After having for ſome time ſilently endured the agonizing terror, which the fear of an huſband's unworthineſs muſt excite in an ingenuous heart, Mrs. Clermont unfortunately reſolved to diſburthen her mind, by confeſſing to Miſs Milton that ſhe had overheard the converſation between her and Patty. That lady candidly acknowledged, that the violent epithets ſhe had uſed againſt Mr. Clermont, proceeded from her lively intereſt in her friend's ſufferings, and not from her knowledge of any ſecret depravity. "But," added ſhe, "I am afraid your maid can give you further information."

"Will my enquiries be juſtifiable, and to what purpoſe will they tend?" reſumed Mrs. Clermont.

They

"They will at leaſt relieve the anguiſh of ſuſpenſe, and if he appears innocent, your harmony will be in ſome degree reſtored; if the contrary, you will have the comfort of knowing the worſt, and the ſooner you are ſeparated from a depraved huſband.

"Separated!"—Exclaimed Mrs. Clermont, turning pale with terror, "for heaven's ſake Eliza, how could you ſuggeſt ſuch an horrid idea; you little know with what paſſionate attachment my heart is irrevocably his. But let us change the ſubject, for I will make no inquiries that may lead to ſuch a horrid cataſtrophe."

"Act as you judge beſt;" returned Miſs Milton, "I have only mentioned what an attachment like that you expreſs would urge *me* to do. I confeſs, uncertainty ſeems to me the moſt dreadful of all conditions; and recollect my dear, that the event you ſhudder at, is at all times optionable, and not the certain conſequence of your endeavouring to reaſſure your mind."

To

To this fallacious reaſoning, Mrs. Clermont weakly yielded her "better judgment," and Patty was applied to for further information. Mr. Clermont's behaviour had been ſo truly inoffenſive in every reſpect, but in the inſtances I have detailed, that Patty had nothing new to communicate; but out of her great zeal to make her lady *eaſy*, ſhe undertook the office of ſpy upon her maſter's conduct, and opened an indirect communication with the Danbury inſpectors.

Nothing however could be procured but petty detractions, and general invective; ſo evidently the reſult of malice, as to be even in *Patty's* opinion undeſerving of repetition. During the courſe of theſe inquiries, Miſs Milton terminated her viſit; Mr. Clermont's mind was ſtill ſo little in uniſon with his Marianne's, that he rejoiced at the departure of a perſon, who he perceived was honoured with that confidence, and thoſe marks of affection, which he believed to be excluſively his right,

right, while ſhe bitterly regretted the abſence of her dear companion.

The happineſs of the Clermonts ſoon aſſumed a more favourable appearance. The indefatigable Patty could hear nothing that was of ſufficient importance to diſturb it, and her lady indulged the hope that the expreſſions which had ſo deeply diſturbed her mind, were only "unweighed words," or thoughtleſs repetitions of the vague calumnies of envy and malevolence. She and Mr. Clermont equally felt the pain of diſcord, and they began inſenſibly to reaſſume the tender affectionate behaviour which had endeared the early hours of their union; when this fair promiſe of felicity was interrupted by an unfortunate incident.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXI.

Very palatable to the Lords of the Creation, as it exhibits them in the poſſeſſion of plenitude of Power.

IN compliance with her friend's parting requeſt, Mrs. Clermont had given a ſolemn promiſe of continuing her journal; and as it was to be truly circumſtantial, it neceſſarily employed great part of her time. While thus engaged, ſhe generally locked her door to prevent interruption; but one day having unfortunately forgotten that precaution, Mr. Clermont ſuddenly appeared. Three ſheets of paper had been filled ready to diſpatch; to ſay the truth, they were as innocent a compoſiton as ever iſſued from a female pen: but as they contained a repetition of what had paſſed in converſation between herſelf and huſband, with comments on the happy change in his behaviour, ſhe anxiouſly wiſhed to conceal them from him; and

on

on his playfully attempting to take them from her, ſhe threw them into the fire, and watched them till conſumed, with ſerious ſolicitude.

Mr. Clermont's mind was not wholly free from the meanneſs of ſuſpicion, and he felt deeply mortified at the idea of a wife's concealing ſecrets from him, which ſhe implicitly confided to another. He ſuppreſſed his chagrine at the moment; but ſince his curioſity to penetrate into this interdicted correſpondence was irreſiſtible, he determined to uſe *any* means to develope the myſtery.

He ſoon procured a letter of Miſs Milton's, and upon breaking the ſeal, realized the proverb reſpecting the fate of ſuſpicious people, for certainly the firſt paragraph was not very complimental to himſelf: it follows,—

"Do not my deareſt Marianne think me inſenſible of the pleaſure you expreſs, at your huſband's appearing conſcious of his cruel injurious treatment of you; I rejoice that your meek ſenſibility, at laſt ſeems to touch

touch his heart with remorſe, may the compunction be laſting! But oh, my ſweet friend, guard againſt the amiable ſuſceptibility of your temper, nor any longer fix your happineſs in the frail promiſes of weak irritable man. Recollect your father's admirable precepts, and contract your fond affection for one who never deſerved, and does not return it."

If Mr. Clermont had poſſeſſed ſufficient patience to peruſe the whole letter; he would have found the aſperity of this paragraph ſoftened by ſeveral conceſſions in his favour, and would have perceived the epithets "weak" and "irritable," which had moſt piqued him, were in reality intended as a cenſure upon his whole ſex. But his paſſion entirely overcame him, and flying to his lady's apartment, he peremptorily charged her immediately to break off all connection with an artful, baſe calumniator, who under the ſpecious maſk of friendſhip, dared to interfere in the ſacred concerns of wedlock, and to traduce a huſband's character even to his wife.

wife. He concluded with a *threat*, that if ſhe refuſed immediate compliance, ſhe ſhould never ſee him more; and after thus juſtifying Miſs Milton's ſentiments by his conduct; he tore the letter into a hundred pieces, and ruſhed out of the room.

Mrs. Clermont remained for ſome moments ſtupified with ſurpriſe, and gazing upon the fragments, in which ſhe recognized the writing of her dear Eliza. Tears, her uſual reſource, at length came to her relief, and ſhe was indulging in a very plentiful flow, when a ſervant entering the room, announced the arrival of Mr. and Miſs Dudley; Marianne flew to meet them, and for a moment forgot her ſorrow in their embraces.

I muſt now account for their ſudden arrival. Mr. Dudley was haſtened to London by letters from his agent, informing him that a clear diſcovery had been made of the long ſuſpected villany of the elder Tonnereau, and that in conſequence he was taken into cuſtody; Louiſa's ardent deſire to ſee a ſiſter, whoſe letters had for

ſome

ſome time betrayed an expreſſion of tender melancholy, induced her to expedite her intended viſit to Stannadine.

Mrs. Clermont did not wait for their inquiries to explain the reaſon for the tears which ſtill ſwam in her radiant eyes; ſhe frankly owned that her father had formed the juſteſt eſtimate of the married ſtate, but added, that perhaps even *he* would not have expected that Mr. Clermont's love ſhould already have ſo far evaporated, as to permit him to inſiſt upon her abandoning a friend, who had been the chief bleſſing of her life. She ſobbed out her reſolution never to renounce her Eliza, and then aſked if her lot was not that of peculiar miſery?

"No, my child," ſaid Mr. Dudley, "you only participate in the ills common to humanity; and I have a ſatisfaction in reflecting, that the troubles ariſing from contrariety of temper and opinion, may be remedied by prudence and conceſſion, Mr. Clermont has doubtleſs reaſons to urge for this peremptory ſtyle. Where is he?

he? I muſt ſee him, and bring about an immediate explanation."

A ſervant being ſummoned, informed them, that his maſter was gone out on horſeback, and had refuſed any attendance. Mrs. Clermont's diſtreſs now aſſumed the appearance of phrenzy, from apprehenſions reſpecting the ſafety of the perſon, whom ſhe a few moments before conſidered as a relentleſs tyrant. Every domeſtick was diſpatched in ſearch of the dear fugitive, and ſcarcely could the efforts of her father and ſiſter reſtrain her from joining them.

Intelligence at length arrived, that he had been ſeen on the road to the park; Mrs. Clermont now earneſtly preſſed her father to follow him, and to conjure him immediately to return home. Nothing elſe could alleviate her anxiety, and having obtained this promiſe from Mr. Dudley, ſhe became tolerably calm.

Louiſa's heart not only melted with pity for her ſiſter's wild diſtreſs, but for the ſilent anguiſh which oppreſſed her de-

jected father. She knew his mind had lately received an additional weight of anguish, from the apprehension that he must either engage in a criminal prosecution, against a man with whom he had formerly lived in the strictest bond of friendship, or else suffer a nefarious villain to escape punishment; "my dear father," said Louisa to herself, while her sister was in the extremest paroxysms of grief; "with what calm dignity do you support sorrow."

Having persuaded Marianne to recline on the sopha for a few minutes, she followed her father to the door, to breathe her ardent wishes for the success of his embassy; "I do not fear," replied Mr. Dudley, "but that I shall persuade Mr. Clermont to return; do you exercise your influence over your sister, and conjure her to abandon a friend, who I suspect has acted a most indefensible part; if she yields her husband will probably be ashamed of his unmanly violence. My fears, Louisa, were but too just. They have

good

good hearts, and a real affection for each other; but Marianne is married to a man as enthuſiaſtical and imprudent as herſelf. How diſgraceful are theſe baby quarrels! how ridiculous theſe high theatrical paſſions, which ſubject them to the laugh of the neighbourhood! Nay, worſe, which point out to artful villany, a means whereby it may *effectually* undermine domeſtick happineſs."

Miſs Dudley exerted all her eloquence, to perſuade Mrs. Clermont to conſent to any terms of reconciliation her huſband ſhould impoſe; her arguments were anſwered by declamatory flouriſhes on the inviolable ſanctity of friendſhip, and the juſtice of defending one whoſe zeal, if allowed to be imprudent, was yet the reſult of pure affection.

Mr. Dudley was not more ſucceſsful in his mediation; Mr. Clermont, after an exaggerated detail of his provocation, urged the fond *idolatry* with which he had loved his Marianne, and her *ingratitude*, in heſitating to ſacrifice to his *juſt* reſentment

ment her blind partiality for a dangerous woman, who aſſumed the pretext of friendſhip, to further her execrable deſigns againſt his peace. Lord Clermont, though leſs violent than his ſon, was *firmly* of opinion, that the intimacy with Miſs Milton muſt be immediately terminated; and Lady Clermont, who happened unfortunately to be at the park, took this opportunity to vent her ſarcaſtick malignity. She termed Marianne a well-meaning young creature, but to her *certain* knowledge, too deficient in her ideas of propriety, to be entirely intruſted with her own conduct.

Mr. Dudley checked the reſentment of wounded paternal affection, by recollecting his character of mediator. He gave up Miſs Milton's conduct as wholly indefenſible; and in general condemned confidents as dangerous to matrimonial peace. But he urged the propriety of gently looſening thoſe ties, which though abſolutely fantaſtick, had a real influence over his daughter's mind. The very word

Mr.

Mr. Clermont had uſed (ſacrifice) implied reluctance, and he pointed out how much more deſirable it was that her reaſon ſhould be convinced reſpecting the impropriety of her friend's conduct, and conſequently the neceſſity of diſſolving the connection; than, that a ſudden breach ſhould be impoſed upon her, as an act of obedience. In the former caſe, Mr. Clermont might expect his wife would ſoon look *up* to him with grateful deference, for having reſcued her from a dangerous error; in the latter, a recollection of the violent meaſures which had been taken, would induce her to honour her ſevered friend with a regret of which ſhe was unworthy. In concluſion he urged his ſon-in-law to a generous unconditional return, by the conſideration how powerfully ſuch a conceſſion would affect his daughter's heart.

Lady Clermont here interfered, and prevented theſe arguments from determining the yielding huſband. She produced the letter in which the incautious

but well-intentioned Marianne had confeſſed, that weakneſs and precipitate confidence were her conſtitutional failings. Her Ladyſhip prevented all the impreſſion the unqueſtionable ingenuouſneſs of this acknowledgement might have made, by obſerving that ſhe had long ago entirely forgiven the little offence which this letter was meant to palliate, and only produced it as a proof of the indiſputable neceſſity of her ſon's ſupplying the firm deciſion, which the dear creature confeſſedly wanted, and of his reſcuing his amiable wife from ſuch a dangerous friend as Miſs Milton was. This opinion met with general approbation, and Mr. Dudley on his return to his daughter, recommended unconditional ſubmiſſion, as the only terms on which Mr. Clermont would conſent to return home.

"I do not," ſaid he to Mrs. Clermont, "now urge your determination by common *motives*. Every thing which ought to be moſt dear and ſacred to you, is at ſtake. It is not four months ſince the

world ſaw you enter into marriage, under the happieſt auſpices of mutual love. Your diſagreements cannot be concealed, and the moſt candid will hardly be able to perſuade themſelves that they could have proceeded to this length, without ſomewhat criminal on one ſide at leaſt. Let your ſtory, my dear girl, be told even by a partial friend, believe me the prudent part of the world will ſeverely reprobate an attachment (though to a female) to which you can reſolve to ſacrifice the higher duties you have recently bound yourſelf, by the moſt ſolemn and inviolable oaths, to fulfil."

"Are then the names of wife and friend incompatible?" exclaimed Mrs. Clermont.

"I will give you my opinion on that ſubject hereafter, at preſent the *known* duty of a wife calls upon you for immediate performance. Riſk not your future happineſs by any further delay. Take your pen, and dictate an adieu to Miſs Milton. It may be affectionate, but let it be determined; and then recal your

huſband whilſt it is yet in your power to recal him."

Mrs. Clermont reluctantly complied. Her letter to her Eliza was blotted with tears, and incoherent through diſtreſs. After *one* gentle reproof, it was filled with copious complaints againſt the hard neceſſity which impoſed a ſeparation, and with proteſtations of inviolable regard. To theſe fond ebullitions of love, Miſs Dudley ſubjoined a ſoftened narrative of the events which had led to the prohibition; and ſhe urged Miſs Milton, by all her regard for her Marianne's future peace not to attempt to diſpute its validity.

I will inſert Mrs. Clermont's letter to her huſband—

"I have complied with your injunctions, and have given up for *you* the friend whoſe affection conſtituted my chief felicity for fourteen years. A friend whoſe only fault was indiſcreet partiality for me! In doing this, I have torn from my heart its deareſt object, yourſelf *alone* excepted. My regret cannot be diſguiſed,

nor

nor will it yield to time. Your renewed and uniform tenderneſs can alone recompence me, for the ſacrifice *you* have enjoined. Return, my Edward, immediately, and ſave your once beloved Marianne from ſinking under the weight of her ſorrows."

Mr. Dudley did not diſapprove the pathetick ſincerity expreſſed in this letter. It had the deſired effect. Mr. Clermont immediately returned to Stannadine; again intreated his lady to forget the paſt, and encouraged her to look forward to future golden days, by the *gracious* aſſurance that he would always remember her meritorious compliance.

CHAP. XXXII.

The author's opinion of the politicks of Hymen, ſeem to be in favour of a limited monarchy.

THOUGH the quarrels of the Clermonts might in their violence, frequency, and ſpeedy termination, be juſtly com-

pared to the diſputes of children, they did not end in *quite* ſo cordial a reconciliation. It is perhaps impoſſible to "pluck memory from her ſeat," or to "eraſe a written trouble from the brain," when the mind has paſſed the firſt ſtage of adoleſcence. Mrs. Clermont recollected that every diſagreement had been adjuſted with increaſed difficulty, her experience of the paſt gave her but a melancholy anticipation of the future, and the renunciation of ſo dear a connection was too painful, and impoſed in too authoritative a manner to be cheerfully ſubmitted to. The fear of offending taught her to *try* to conceal her grief, but her pallid cheek and ſwoln eyes the next morning, plainly proved the night had been ſpent in tears.

Conſcious of paſt ſeverity, Mr. Clermont endeavoured to conciliate his wife's affections, by more marked attentions to her father. He earneſtly preſſed him to poſtpone his intended journey to town, to give up all endeavours to recover his fortune,

fortune, and to depend entirely upon the ſteady friendſhip with which he would cheerfully uſe every effort to alleviate his ſorrows. Mr. Dudley's conduct in influencing his daughter's ſubmiſſion, had baniſhed from her huſband's mind a ſuſpicion which an expreſſion in Miſs Milton's fatal letter excited, and Mr. Clermont now felt gratefully inclined to promote the wiſhes of a man, who had gratified his.

"Make my child happy," ſaid Mr. Dudley, "and you will impoſe upon me the higheſt obligation."

Mr. Clermont threw his eyes upon the ground, and with a remorſeful air ſaid, it ſhould in future be his ſtudy to prove how highly he rated her compliance.

"I do not, Sir, mean to reproach you, or wholly to vindicate my daughter; but I wiſh ſtrictly to caution you againſt two errors. Avoid calling in any perſon to witneſs your little domeſtick diſputes; a mediator in matrimonial quarrels is more likely to widen than to heal the breach.

Rather chuſe to keep every diſagreement a profound ſecret, for if they are at all expoſed, curious impertinents will publiſh them with *added* circumſtances, and however painful theſe circumſtances are to yourſelves, the world will find in them matter for entertainment and ridicule.

"Let me alſo, my dear Sir, intreat you to look upon your wife's errors with the tendereſt indulgence. If an action can be referred to two motives, kindly affix that which is leaſt reprehenſible. You uſed an expreſſion at the Park, Mr. Clermont, it was inconſiderately uttered, yet it ſtruck me to the heart. You called my child ungrateful. Her heart is devotedly yours, you may break it by unkindneſs, but you cannot eſtrange it. She is young, inexperienced, and romantick, but ſhe is not, cannot be ungrateful. Ingratitude is the vice of a narrow or depraved ſoul, it never exiſts in a warm impaſſioned diſpoſition. Oh, Sir, pardon my agitation, but the daughter of the exalted woman I have long lamented, and ſpeedily hope

to

to rejoin, never could diſgrace her mother's memory by ingratitude to an affectionate huſband."

"Proceed," ſaid Mr. Clermont. "Your words ſink into my ſoul; have you more to urge?" "Nothing!" replied Mr. Dudley emphatically, and graſping him by the hand; "except that you will never ſuffer my Louiſa to want a protector, or an aſylum."

The ladies here entered, and Mr. Clermont turned aſide to conceal the emotion Mr. Dudley's ſolemn reproof had excited. The fond father took this opportunity to ſlip a letter into Marianne's hand. "I had much to ſay to you, my dear child," ſaid he, "and it is of too important a nature to be intruſted to the vague impreſſion converſation imprints upon the mind. Your worthy huſband has urged me to reſide with you; his requeſt is the more pleaſing, as it evidently proceeds from his affection for you. If I live I ſhall be often with you: if not, conſult that paper, I ſhall ſpeak in it when dead."

At theſe words his daughters burſt into tears. "I muſt go with you to London, Sir," ſaid Louiſa. "You ſhall not leave me while you indulge theſe afflicting forebodings."

"My mind is uncommonly tranquil and ſerene, my dear girls, this morning. I wonder, Louiſa, you do not perceive my artifice. I wiſhed to make a deep impreſſion upon Marianne's mind, and ſee I have ſucceeded. Dry your eyes, my darlings, and bid a cheerful adieu to that father whoſe only remaining wiſh is, to ſee his children happy."

While Mrs. Clermont threw herſelf into her father's arms in an agony of affection, the dignified Louiſa raiſing her meek eyes to Heaven in a ſilent ejaculation, implored its beneficent attention to that intereſting object, a good man in affliction. The air of forced gayety which Mr. Dudley aſſumed at parting, could not baniſh the dejection the ſolemnity of his expreſſions had inſpired. His daughters followed him with their eyes as long as poſſible,

poſſible, and then ſilently withdrew to their reſpective apartments.

I ſhall conclude this chapter with a copy of his letter to Mrs. Clermont.

'Before I leave my Marianne, happy, 'I truſt, in the recovered affections of her 'huſband. I will give her my promiſed 'opinion, reſpecting a ſubject to which 'I thought her yeſterday too much agitated 'to attend.

'You aſked me if the name of wife 'and friend are incompatible, certainly 'not. They are titles which mutually 'reflect luſtre upon each other; and I 'have ever conſidered *that* young woman 'as particularly fortunate, who had ſecured 'the eſteem of ſome diſcreet matron, and 'regulated her conduct by the dictates of 'experience. I muſt, however, repeat 'that a wife ſhould *retain* no connections 'which her huſband decidedly diſapproves. 'A prudent woman indeed will never '*form* any which can give pain to a rea-'ſonable man. She will chuſe her friends 'with judgment, confide in them with

'caution, and love them with ſincerity, 'yet ſtill with moderation. You may 'think theſe limitations cold and narrow, 'they are ſuch as you ought always to 'regard.

'Female friendſhip, my child, is often 'diſgraced by a ridiculous imitation. Two 'romantick girls ſelect each other from 'the general maſs of their acquaintance 'as fancy dictates. They relinquiſh the 'practice of acknowledged virtues, to 'indulge in a frivolous intimacy, and 'while they gratify a propenſity for mere 'goſſip, capricious expectations, and 'fantaſtick deſires, ſuppoſe that they 'exhibit a model of one of thoſe angelick 'perfections which *dignify* our natures.

'You ſay you have been accuſtomed 'to communicate every ſentiment of 'your ſoul to your dear Eliza, and you 'think while ſo doing, you were at leaſt '*innocently* employed. Time was not 'given us to be idled away; has any 'moral or mental improvement reſulted 'from this correſpondence? Your heart

'is

'is good, your underſtanding not con-
'temptible; yet could you without con-
'fuſion ſee thoſe ſentiments publickly
'divulged, of which you have made her
'the unreſerved depoſitory. Has not the
'deſire of having ſomewhat to commu-
'nicate, induced you to form a precipi-
'tate judgment, and to utter opinions
'which you afterwards wiſhed to retract.
'Have not the commendations and tender
'expreſſions you have been uſed to re-
'echo to each other, vitiated your affec-
'tions, and rendered you leſs ſenſible of
'the tempered but uniform attachment
'of your other connections.

'But ſuppoſing this perverſion of time
'pardonable in early youth, it can no *longer*
'be excuſable; and had not Mr. Clermont's
'diſapprobation ſuddenly obliged you to
'terminate your connection with Miſs
'Milton, I ſhould have thought that
'your ſenſe of the higher duties to which
'you are called, would have convinced
'you of the neceſſity of appropriating
'leſs time to multiplied expreſſions of

'unmean-

'unmeaning tenderneſs. You are a wife, 'my love; you will I hope ſoon be a 'mother; you are the miſtreſs of a 'family; you are a perſon of fortune; 'you have had a liberal education. What 'an extenſive ſcope of action do theſe 'characters imply! Go, Marianne, and 'thank that Providence, who has placed 'you in a capacity to employ every por-'tion of your time in important occupa-'tions, and to exerciſe the nobleſt feelings 'of the human heart.

'Do not droop with vain regret, be-'cauſe Mr. Clermont appears leſs fault-'leſs than your enthuſiaſtick imagination 'once ſuppoſed. Do not arraign the 'diſpenſations of Heaven, becauſe you 'are not wholly exempt from the common 'ills incident to humanity. Inſtead of 'indulging a fooliſh curioſity reſpecting 'your huſband's conduct, fix your atten-'tion upon your own. Do not regard 'what the idle and malevolent ſay of you, 'or him; you will both be impleaded at 'a different audit. Go, and comfort

'thoſe

'thoſe who drain the dregs of that cup 'of ſorrow, of which you have but 'ſlightly taſted. Go, and relieve the 'wants of poverty, ſmooth the bed of 'ſickneſs, alleviate the anguiſh of incu-'rable grief, diſſipate the gloom of igno-'rance, and if poſſible limit the ravages 'of vice. Riſe to the noble taſk for 'which you were called into exiſtence. 'You cannot want employment when 'you have to prepare yourſelf for eternity. 'You cannot be wretched while you can 'make your fellow-creatures happy.

'Adieu, my Marianne, reſpect your 'huſband's virtues, and divert your atten-'tion from his failings. Love your ſiſter, 'ſhe deſerves your confidence and eſteem. 'Her trials have been ſingular, but they 'have rendered her merit more conſpi-'cuous. Once more farewell, my child, 'if I ſhould not again ſee you in this 'world, give yourſelf to my arms, and 'to the arms of your ſainted mother, as 'an angel of light, in a purer ſtate of 'exiſtence. 'RICHARD DUDLEY.'

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The diſcerning Reader may diſcover ſymptoms of approaching events, of the painful kind.

FOR ſome time Mr. and Mrs. Clermont appeared to have derived conſiderable advantage from the precepts they had received, and their whole behaviour promiſed a perfect renewal of harmony and happineſs. *He* divided his time judiciouſly between the claims of ſocial life, and the elegant amuſements to which he was attached; and *ſhe* turning her attention to the active engagements of benevolence and domeſtick management, ſoon made a conſiderable proficiency, being aſſiſted in her progreſs by her ſiſter, who was an adept in the practice of the retired virtues.

Chriſtmas is a ſeaſon peculiarly adapted to the purpoſes of hoſpitality, and whilſt the Clermonts liberally ſupplied the wants of their indigent neighbours, they did not neglect thoſe inferiour but not unimport-

ant

ant claims, which the laws of ſociety require. Notwithſtanding their diſappointment on a former occaſion, the ſurrounding country were invited to an elegant entertainment; and as the hope of the inviters, reſpecting giving pleaſure, and acquiring popularity, was not ſo ſanguine as before, their humble views were more fully gratified. Indeed they ſeemed to conciliate the affections of their neighbours, by not attempting any extraordinary degree of ſplendor or novelty: for we always reluctantly pay the applauſe *demanded* of us by that merit which is avowedly ſuperiour, or that excellence which is conſcious of its own deſert.

This flattering proſpect was interrupted by the illneſs of Lord Clermont. He had been for ſome weeks at Bath, indiſpoſed by an hereditary gout; and at length grew ſo alarmingly ill, as to render his ſon's preſence neceſſary. It was Mr. Clermont's wiſh, that his Marianne ſhould accompany him, but ſhe unuſed to publick ſcenes, fond of retirement, diſguſted with ſociety,

and

and attached to the habits ſhe had lately adopted, preferred remaining at Stannadine; till her ſiſter ſtrongly urged the danger of riſking her newly-recovered happineſs, by appearing indifferent to her huſband's deſire of her ſociety.

Another motive influenced Louiſa to give this advice. Though Mr. Dudley had prudently concealed his obſervations from Marianne, he had imparted to his elder daughter, his apprehenſion of ſome latent malignity in Lady Clermont; and intreated her occaſionally to guard her ſiſter againſt the machinations of envy and revenge. Miſs Dudley confiding in the rectitude of Marianne's heart, and the innocence of her conduct, ſuppoſed her preſence would moſt effectually ſilence calumny, and defeat cunning. This opinion was theoretically right, but it argued little knowledge of the world, or to uſe a more appropriate and leſs hackneyed phraſe, of extreme human depravity; for I am perſuaded that real malevolence is not ſo common, as miſtake, prejudice,

and

and a cenſorious habit. This laſt, the buſy daughter of Idleneſs and Vanity, does an infinitude of miſchief, with no worſe deſign than amuſing itſelf, and ſhewing its own importance. It is the "fool who toſſes about firebrands in ſport."

The motive that hurried the Clermonts to Bath, precluding Miſs Dudley from accompanying them; ſhe returned to Seatondell, and there had leiſure to moralize upon the incidents of her ſiſter's hiſtory. From it ſhe deduced another proof to illuſtrate theſe important truths, that happineſs is diſtributed with a much evener hand than a curſory obſerver would ſuppoſe; and that its true ſeat is in the ſoul, which when well diſpoſed, can humbly imitate its great Author, and create a Paradiſe in a deſert.

Recollecting the high expectations her ſiſter had formed, and her father's unregarded predictions that they would be diſappointed, the Trojan propheteſs came into her mind, and ſhe compoſed the following

SONNET.

SONNET.

Her hair diſhevel'd, and her robe unty'd,
Caſſandra ruſh'd amongſt the feſtal train,
What time young Paris ſang his nuptial ſtrain,
And led to Priam's roof the Spartan bride:
Of certain woes that muſt that crime betide
The holy virgin propheſied in vain;
Her warning voice could no attention gain
'Till Pyrrhus levell'd Ilium's tow'ring pride.
Ah! in the horrors of that night aghaſt,
What ſhrieks, prophetick maid, thy truth declar'd!
And thus when youth beholds Miſfortune's blaſt
O'erturn the fairy bow'rs by Fancy rear'd,
Too late it muſes on the precepts ſage
Of cool experience, and predictive age.

The letters Miſs Dudley received from London informed her, that Mr. Tonnereau had diſſipated his whole fortune, previous to his being taken into cuſtody; the creditors therefore, could propoſe no other end in proſecuting him for having concealed part of his effects, than that of bringing a villain to puniſhment. Mr. Dudley ſtarted another hope, which appeared more than a phantom. The particular ſhip in which his property was embarked, inſtead of having

having been captured with the reſt of the fleet, had eſcaped into a neutral port in Spaniſh America; the government of which had ordered the cargo to be confiſcated, under the pretence of its being deſigned for contraband trade; but in reality, from the ſuſpicious ſpirit with which the Spaniards conduct their colonial affairs, and their jealouſy of the commercial importance of England. Here Mr. Pelham's friendſhip promiſed a moſt fortunate interpoſition, he was luckily very intimate with the Spaniſh ambaſſador, and through his means a ſtrong memorial was forwarded to the council of the Indies, ſtating the injuſtice of the tranſaction, and demanding reſtitution. Little doubt was entertained of that illuſtrious ſynod's deciding with equity, and the only diſagreeable circumſtance would be, the obliging Mr. Dudley to take a voyage to Spain. The fond father concluded, exulting in the hope, that he ſhould at laſt be able to reward the exemplary virtue of his child.

Louiſa's heart experienced a ſenſation very

very different from pleaſure, at the apprehenſion of what her father's declining health might ſuffer from a ſea voyage. In her anſwer, ſhe begged him to abandon a project which ſhe knew he formed principally with a view to her emolument. Her deſire, ſhe informed him, centred in her dear little farm, which even at that early period of ſpring, wore a promiſing appearance. The crops looked vigourous, the plantations were healthy, and the houſe was ſo conſiderably improved by the little ſums which had been expended upon it, as to appear quite a chearful habitation. "My garden," ſaid ſhe, "is now decorated with a profuſion of vernal flowers, the germs of the lilack are burſting; and my morning walks are enlivened with the carol of birds, and the buſy hum of bees. I look forward to the approach of May with lover-like expectations, and have indeed ſolicited the agreeable goddeſs to haſten her approach, in the following addreſs:

SONNET

SONNET TO MAY.

Come May, attir'd in ſplendor all thy own;
Enchantreſs come! reanimate the grove,
Hang on the buoyant breeze thy floating throne,
And wake the ſong of univerſal love:
The ſprouting herbage for thy mandate ſtays,
Long nipp'd and ſhrivel'd by protracted cold;
And the ſwoln corn ſtill fearfully delays,
'Till thou ſhalt bid the tender blade unfold.
The ſhiv'ring Naids, who deſpairing fled,
When rude Aquarius rear'd his icy pale,
Led back their fountains to their wonted bed,
Prepar'd to murmur through the graſſy vale:
The fair hair'd graces, and Idalian boy,
Await thy call to lead the dance of rural joy.

"Your preſence my dear father will add to all the beauties which the ſeaſon promiſes, a charm in which they are deficient: I mean that of ſociety. Poor Waldon regrets your abſence, almoſt as much as myſelf; he viſits me very frequently. I believe we entertain our neighbours, but in defiance of ſcandal, I always tell him that I am glad to ſee him; and have juſt perſuaded him to teach me backgammon. Sometimes I divert him by muſick and ſinging;

ſinging; yet I will own our tête-a-têtes have a ſameneſs in them, which I believe proceeds from the recollection of more agreeable trios. Dear Sir, return to Seatondell, I need no Spaniſh dollars to make me happy.

"If your reſolution is too far fixed to yield to my intreaties, you muſt allow me to be equally tenacious of my determination of accompanying you. My fear of the ſea cannot deter me from fulfilling the duty which I owe you. Do not conteſt this point with me, I claim it as a right due to the affection of your ever-grateful daughter,

"LOUISA DUDLEY."

CHAP. XXXIV.

Mrs. Prudentia further developes a character of extreme malevolence, but without copying the likeneſs from her own ſiſterhood.

THE order of my narrative conducts me back to Marianne's hiſtory.

Mr.

Mr. Clermont on his arrival at Bath, found his father conſiderably recovered from his alarming indiſpoſition, to the extreme mortification of Lady Clermont, who flattered herſelf that ſhe ſhould be ſpeedily releaſed from the hateful yoke of unhappy marriage. The natural diſagreeableneſs of her temper, completely ſoured by contemptuous treatment, and now galled by *diſappointment*, in ſpite of the aſſumed ſuavity of politeneſs, impreſſed upon her peeviſh countenance the wretchedneſs of her heart. The youth, beauty, and ſweetneſs of Marianne, had at firſt excited in her mind the baleful paſſion of envy. Her tender affections had never been poured into the boſom of her family; ſhe was ſtill in the prime of life, and unwilling to renounce the falſe ſatisfaction ſhe received from liſtening to the Syren ſong of adulation. Mrs. Clermont muſt now of neceſſity be introduced into that part of the great world, which the ſeaſon had convened at Bath. Her Ladyſhip expected to find her a powerful

rival: but when Marianne firſt viſited the rooms, her beauty excited an attention far exceeding *thoſe* expectations. Unfortunately the lovely recluſe became quite the faſhion; her ſimplicity and *naïveté* encreaſed her elegance; and her modeſty and diffidence had all the charm of novelty, in the circle to which ſhe was introduced. The town rung with, "did you ever ſee ſo lovely a creature? How aſtoniſhing ſhe did not come out ſooner." The compliments and attentions paid to Lady Clermont's rank were cold and faint, and rendered the admiration which youth and beauty attracted ſtill more apparent.

There was beſides another motive to excite envy and hatred in her Ladyſhip's breaſt; Marianne appeared to have recovered the heart of her huſband; their behaviour to each other, though not diſtinguiſhed by the unremitting aſſiduity of fond lovers, was indicative of complacence and mutual affection. Sometimes a ſoft melancholy appeared in her countenance, but it was ſo tempered with ſweetneſs,

ſweetneſs, that inſtead of offending it ſeemed to charm Mr. Clermont, and to engage him to a more ſtudiouſly tender attention, in hopes of diſpelling the meek, placid dejection.

Lady Clermont was both wretched and diſagreeable herſelf, and every perſon who appeared amiable and happy, was to her an object of diſguſt. The mild luſtre of wedded love, which ſhe now every day beheld, increaſed, by the power of contraſt, the gloom of her own miſery. She determined to endeavour to interrupt the happineſs ſhe could not ſhare, and reconciled herſelf to the diabolical deſign, by overlooking Marianne's merits, and aggravating her faults. She *reſolved* to think her a weak, yet cunning girl; ſhe termed her refinement and ſenſibility, affectation; her tenderneſs, hypocriſy; and ſhe pretended to pity her ſon, for having been duped by ſuch an inferior character.

Meanwhile Mrs. Clermont's conduct, though not free from indiſcretion, was amiable and intentionally right. Inſtead of being captivated by the noiſe and glare

of faſhionable life, ſhe ſeemed diſguſted and confounded. The voice of admiration which every where purſued her, did not excite even a momentary ſatisfaction. Inſtead of being enchanted with the attention of the fine gentlemen who followed her, ſhe attached criminality to what others termed innocent gallantry; and by the ruſtick morality of her notions ſoon offended all her Ceciſbeos. In her opinion, every deviation from the ſtrict rules of virtue and delicacy ſunk a character into the loweſt pit of infamy; had ſhe confined this ſentiment to her own breaſt, it would only have had the ſalutary effect of regulating her own conduct; but Mrs. Clermont was one of thoſe who think aloud, and ſhe was remarkably injudicious in the choice of thoſe perſons, to whom ſhe imparted her opinions. If their behaviour was decent, and ſhe had never heard any harm of them, ſhe candidly concluded that their hearts were as innocent and undeſigning as her own; and that their ſentiments muſt correſpond. She had ſeen too little of the world to know

know that propriety of manner is often aſſumed by profligacy, and that many characters are infamous which have not been expoſed to publick notoriety. Indeed ſhe was unacquainted with the private hiſtory and connections of the great world; and one day in the pump-room exclaimed againſt the folly and wickedneſs of uſing coſmeticks, to a faded ghoſt of beauty, who was juſt arrived from the Hot-Wells, where ſhe had been endeavouring to repair the ravages which paint had made in her conſtitution. Another time, Mrs. Clermont left off dancing, to proteſt againſt the ſhameful effrontery with which a married Lady who ſtood near her, encouraged the advances of her partner. Her indignation was proper, but the perſon to whom ſhe vented it, was a celebrated demirep, who had been ſeparated from her huſband for more than *doubtful* gallantry: though, as ſhe was a woman of high rank, the world *choſe* to be charitable, and ſtill admitted her into ſociety. But Mrs.

Clermont committed a ſtill more pointed error, upon being invited to play at gold Loo, when ſhe poſitively aſſured a peereſs who had juſt ruined her lord at Pharo, that nothing ſhould ever induce her to engage in the infamous habit of gaming, which ſhe thought not only fooliſh and extravagant, but indelicate and immoral.

Lady Clermont beheld her daughter-in-law's miſtakes with pleaſure, hoping that they would have the effect of terminating her popularity. Nor was ſhe diſappointed. Some hated the fair reprover, from the idea that ſhe intended to affront them. Others deſpiſed her as a fool, becauſe ſhe was ignorant of what every body elſe knew. The moſt candid conſidered her as an impertinent moraliſt, and every body was ready, at leaſt, to *hear* tales to her diſadvantage.

I ſhall hazard a bold conjecture, yet I am inclined to affirm, that the genius of goſſiping has as many worſhippers in the refined circles of high life, as even in the environs of Danbury. They indeed aſſume

aſſume a more poliſhed appearance, and ſpeak out of a courtly vocabulary; but their idol is ſtill the offspring of Vanity and Idleneſs, and their purſuits and pleaſures are eventually the ſame.

Amongſt the company which the ſeaſon had ſummoned to Bath, Mr. Clermont had the pleaſure to recognize his friend Aubrey. That young gentleman *really* poſſeſſed a good heart, joined to an agreeable originality of manner. He was delighted to find that the thoughtleſs impropriety of his behaviour at Stannadine, had not eſſentially injured his friend's happineſs, and he was impatient to obtain Mrs. Clermont's *full* forgiveneſs; for he ſincerely admired both her perſon and character. Marianne was placable in her diſpoſition, ſhe felt a predilection for her huſband's moſt intimate friend, which might be eſteemed an implied compliment to his taſte, and ſhe found Mr. Aubrey a man of good ſenſe and information, qualities not always diſcernable in modern men of the world. Nothing could be

purer than her heart, or more innocent than her conduct; but even diſcretion will not always preſerve us from calumny. An invidious whiſper, firſt invented by the watchful malice of Lady Clermont, was rapidly circulated by that peſtiferous humour of detraction, againſt which I will ever dart my lance with true Quixote fervour, until I have baniſhed it from ſociety. The ſucceſs of my warfare is at beſt but problematical; yet ſurely the laudable deſign merits approbation. I am convinced its accompliſhment would prove a greater bleſſing to ſociety, than moſt of the projects of reform ſuggeſted by *modern* patriots and philoſophers.

To return from my digreſſion; detraction was not the only engine employed by Lady Clermont againſt her daughter's peace: the reader will remember that I ſome time ago left Mrs. Patty buſily employed in an unſucceſsful endeavour to diſcover her maſter's faults. She had been lately thrown into the ſhade; for Miſs Dudley, during her viſit at Stanna-

dine,

dine, had argued ſo forcibly againſt the folly and danger of low confidents, that a viſible alteration took place in Mrs. Clermont's behaviour. Our redoubted Abigail was piqued at the change, and determined to recover her miſtreſs's favour; even if it was at the expence of her repoſe.

Chance promoted her deſign by a common incident. A violent fracas took place between herſelf and Mrs. Bonjou, Lady Clermont's waiting-woman; on precedency, beauty, and conſequence. On the laſt head Patty urged, that her lady had never treated her like a common ſervant; that ſhe told her all her ſecrets, and whenever a quarrel took place between her maſter and her lady, ſhe was the firſt perſon informed of it. She added, that ſhe could ſay a great deal more if ſhe choſe it; but that her lady *knew* her prudence, or ſhe never would have given her the commiſſions ſhe had done.

Highly as Patty thought of her own underſtanding, ſhe had to encounter people of ſuperior art. Mrs. Bonjou flew

to her lady, whoſe ſaturnine features relaxed with pleaſure at the intelligence. Recovering from a hearty laugh, a luxury ſhe did not often enjoy, "well, Bonjou," ſaid ſhe, "I deſire you will henceforth honour Mrs. Patty's conſequence with proper treatment, or as ſhe is her miſtreſs's particular friend, I may chance to be implicated in your quarrels. But ſeriouſly I cannot think Mrs. Clermont quite ſo great a fool; ſuppoſe you try. Get acquainted with this prodigy of prudence, and bore her with ſome ſtory, no matter what. We ſhall ſee if it circulates, and if it does I will make it a means to deter *my* ſon's wife from diſgracing herſelf by ſuch reſpectable attachments."

Mrs. Bonjou underſtood her office. She made a conciliatory apology to Patty, and they became ſworn friends. In the courſe of their intimacy, the latter divulged every family ſecret which ſhe either knew or ſuſpected; and Mrs. Bonjou was extremely ſorry for the pretty young creature, for ſhe knew her young Lord never deſerved

deſerved her. "Vat you think," ſaid ſhe, "he go to Monſieur Aubrey for love, ſo often. Oh no, all ſham. He do not go to ſee Monſieur Aubrey, but one ſad diable woman, little way off: and then ſays he goes there."

Patty haſtened to communicate this terrible intelligence. She found her miſtreſs in her dreſſing room, waiting for Lady Clermont's ſummons to attend her to the rooms. There was an unuſual degree of ſprightlineſs in her manner, and a placid ſmile upon her countenance, which few people would have choſen to diſturb. Patty's prefatory aſſurance that ſhe had ſomething very important to ſay, interrupted this happy calm; and ere her tale was finiſhed, a death-like paleneſs ſtole over every feature. At this inſtant Lady Clermont entered; "The carriage, my dear, waits," ſaid ſhe, and without appearing to perceive that Marianne's trembling limbs could ſcarce ſupport her, hurried her into the chariot with officious attention.

CHAP. XXXV.

Innocence and ſimplicity are inſufficient guards againſt malignity and detraction, unleſs accompanied by diſcretion.

LADY Clermont, though not naturally of a communicative diſpoſition, happened this evening to be unuſually converſible. She indulged herſelf in a number of bright ſallies, and finding them not honoured with proper attention, deſcanted in praiſe of cheerfulneſs, which ſhe defined to be an infallible ſign of a good heart, and a contented mind.

During her Ladyſhip's harangue, the afflicted Marianne ſat almoſt devoid of utterance or recollection. Thought followed thought, in agonizing ſucceſſion, but none of them tended to organize the chaos in her ſoul. The carriage at length ſtopped, and they proceeded to the ball room, where Mrs. Clermont, declining every invitation to dancing or cards, retired into an

an obſcure corner, and abſorbed in her own diſtreſs, remained inſenſible to the gay ſcene around her.

Rouſed from this reverie by the voice of Mr. Aubrey, ſhe ſtarted, looked round with apprehenſion, and felt in his unexpected appearance the confirmation of all her fears: for Mr. Clermont had declined accompanying her that evening, on the pretext of a pre-engagement to dine with his friend. She enquired after her huſband, with an eagerneſs for which Aubrey could as little account, as for the melancholy poſition in which ſhe was ſitting when he firſt accoſted her. He attempted to relieve her diſtreſs, by aſſuring her, that his friend was perfectly well but two hours ago. "Where is he now," enquired Mrs. Clermont with redoubled agitation, Aubrey vowed he could not tell. The party had broken up ſooner than was intended, and he knew not how Clermont had diſpoſed of himſelf, he believed to the play, and offered to go and look for him. "Have the humanity," ſaid ſhe, "firſt

to

to order my carriage; I will return home immediately." He begged ſhe would let him go and call Lady Clermont, who was engaged in a party at cards; "Oh no! exclaimed Marianne; "her preſence will only be a reſtraint upon me, and my heart is too full to conſult propriety." He offered her his arm, it was a ſupport which her extreme agitation rendered neceſſary, and ſhe hurried out of the room, either unconſcious that her behaviour had excited general attention, or too much diſordered to regard it. The rival beauties whom her ſuperior charms had mortified, and the ſpecious hypocrites whom her unguarded remarks had tacitly reproved; now joined in exclaiming againſt "the detected moraliſt," as they termed her. Her declining Lady Clermont's attendance had been overheard; the words ſhe uſed were capable of an invidious conſtruction, and they readily gave them that tendency; but when it was obſerved that Mr. Aubrey was not afterwards ſeen in the aſſembly rooms that evening, they all declared that candour

dour itſelf could ſuppoſe no other than that Mrs. Clermont was criminal; ſarcaſtically adding, that it was doubtleſs the firſt affair ſhe had ever engaged in, or ſhe would have managed her aſſignation leſs publickly.

I will however vindicate Mrs. Clermont to my readers, and *aſſure* them that ſhe returned home *alone*, that ſhe retired to her chamber, declined Patty's attendance, and judiciouſly entered upon the taſk of calm recollection. She remembered her father's invaluable letter, and again peruſed it, with a deſign to ſee if any thing he ſaid, would apply to the preſent emergency. His precepts againſt ſuſpiciouſly watching her huſband's conduct, and believing (or indeed liſtening to) every idle tale were in point, and ſhe began to think that ſhe had yielded to her old infirmity of afflicting herſelf upon ſlight grounds, and ſuffering her paſſions to obſcure her judgment. She determined to diſmiſs the officious Patty, who ſhe perceived ſedulouſly employed herſelf in agitating her mind,

mind, and while ſhe was in this temper, ſhe heard Mr. Clermont's voice upon the ſtairs. She flew to meet him, he anxiouſly enquired reſpecting the indiſpoſition of which Mr. Aubrey had juſt given him a confuſed and alarming account. He told her that he had hurried out of the theatre the moment his friend brought him this intelligence, and the candour and ſolicitude of his manner confirmed this aſſurance.

It generally happens when a ſuſpected perſon clears himſelf in one inſtance from a fault of which he was accuſed, that a generous mind immediately forgets its former doubts, and inveſts the acquitted perſon in the white robe of unſullied innocence. It proved ſo in the preſent inſtance. The towering edifice of tragedy ſorrow which Mrs. Clermont had been for ſome hours erecting, fell to the ground. *He* was no longer treacherous, falſe, ungrateful, but every thing that was kind and good; nor was ſhe a miſerable forſaken woman, but a credulous creature who had behaved

behaved very ridiculouſly, for a reaſon which ſhe was aſhamed to own. Candid and generous ſhe confeſſed herſelf exceedingly to blame, in giving way to her feelings from ſlight miſtakes and miſrepreſentations; ſhe intreated Mr. Clermont would not require an explanation of the paſt, and promiſed greater ſelf-command in future. No huſband would like to be ſummoned in an alarming manner, from a favourite diverſion, to attend upon a wife's whims. He felt diſpoſed to give a gentle lecture, which ſhe was receiving with meek contrition, when Lady Clermont appeared full of anxiety for the dear creature's health, having but that moment heard of her illneſs. Her apprehenſions on that head being removed, ſhe very *tenderly* blamed Marianne for not requiring her attendance. It was very *odd* my dear in you, particularly in *your* ſituation, to take Mr. Aubrey home with you; you ought to have had a female friend, "Aubrey, Madam!" exclaimed Mr. Clermont. "Aubrey could not go home with her.

He

He ſaw her to the chariot, and then came in ſearch of me." "Indeed," replied her Ladyſhip, "Then I beg, Edward, that you will make that circumſtance known. It is highly important that it ſhould, I aſſure you. I will take care to tell Lady Richly *myſelf*, that the world is miſtaken. Mr. Aubrey did not go home with Mrs. Clermont."

So innocent was Marianne's heart, that ſhe did not even underſtand the *point* of this inſinuation, and the next morning when Mr. Aubrey called to enquire after her health, ſhe did not conſider her being alone in her dreſſing-room, a ſufficient reaſon to prevent her from receiving a viſit from her huſband's friend. She even met him with a ſmile of gratitude, and after aſſuring him that ſhe was perfectly recovered, and thanking him for his attention the preceding evening; "I have," ſaid ſhe, "two requeſts to make. Endeavour to forget how abſurdly I behaved laſt night; and when you hear me cenſured

cenſured for it, try if poſſible to invent an excuſe for me."

"I muſt firſt *ſee* your abſurdities," replied Aubrey, "before I can forget them; and as for the cenſures of the idle and the envious, it is the tax which merit muſt always pay. I aſſure you I ſhould never have wiſhed for the honor of your acquaintance, if I had not been told by every body, that you was the ſtrangeſt of all ſtrange beings."

At this inſtant Mr. Clermont entered the room. He was juſt returned from a publick breakfaſt, where he had heard his wife's conduct canvaſſed in an audible whiſper. The ladies affirmed that ſhe muſt be very ſeriouſly indiſpoſed; for it was evident ſhe knew not what ſhe was about. The gentlemen affected to envy Aubrey as a lucky fellow, in having the honour to eſcort the divine creature home. Though theſe witticiſms afforded mirth to *them*, they were death to Mr. Clermont's peace. He conſtrued every enquiry after his lady, which politeneſs dictated, into an oblique

oblique affront, and unable to command himſelf, he returned home in very ill humour; and ſurpriſed Mr. Aubrey and Mrs. Clermont engaged in very lively converſation, which the gloom in his manner ſuddenly terminated. His Aubrey was never before unwelcome, nor did his Marianne's ſmiles ever give torture to his heart till that moment. He reſtrained his feelings, but they made an indelible impreſſion upon his mind; and Mrs. Clermont might certainly refer the miſery of her future life to theſe apparently trivial incidents.

I have deſcribed theſe circumſtances with ſome degree of minuteneſs, for though the effect of them did not immediately appear, or only in a ſmall degree of ſullen reſerve, they ſunk deep into Mr. Clermont's ſoul, and gradually produced a *total* change of character. I will not minutely detail this alteration, but will confine my garrulous humour to a general account of its cauſes and conſequence.

The

The ſpirit that took poſſeſſion of Mr. Clermont's mind, though not ſtrictly jealouſy, bore a near affinity to that "green-eyed monſter." He was not ſo credulous as to believe the calumnies of detraction, nor ſo undiſcerning as not to perceive his mother's malice: nor did he doubt his Marianne's innocence, or even *once* ſuſpect that her gentle heart had ſtrayed from its acknowledged poſſeſſor. He knew the purity of her ſoul, and the conſtancy of her temper, but this did not acquit her of levity and indiſcretion; upon which baſis he judged it poſſible that ſlander and calumny had erected their fabrick of falſhood. She was herſelf conſcious of impropriety, and aſhamed to diſcloſe the motives of her behaviour. She had owned herſelf to have acted very wrong, and this confeſſion carried with it the force of a thouſand witneſſes. His thoughts ran in the ſame ſtrain of faſtidious delicacy with the great Roman conqueror. "My wife muſt not only

only be free from guilt, but alſo from ſuſpicion."

Early in life, before his character was formed, or his opinions methodized, Mr. Clermont entered into marriage; with vague, floating ideas of angelick goodneſs, and conſummate bliſs. In proportion as his romantick enthuſiaſm had raiſed the mortal nymph into a goddeſs, his cooler, but not more accurate judgment, as the infatuation of love ſubſided, magnified her errors into indelible offences. He ſaw her weakneſs, timidity, irreſolution, and imprudence: he forgot her gentleneſs, ſweetneſs, candour, and generoſity. Vanity had ever been intermingled with his love. He fancied that when he produced his idol to the world, every heart would acknowledge its perfection, every tongue confeſs his happineſs, and applaud his judgment. His Marianne had been produced to the world. The tranſient admiration which ſhe had at firſt excited had rather been a tribute paid to her beauty than to her intellectual endowments;

ments; it ſoon ſubſided, and now her conduct was ridiculed and her character defamed. He had not courage to withſtand "the world's dread laugh, which ſcarce the firm philoſopher can ſcorn." His temper was not naturally gentle, it had only acquired an occaſional ſuavity from love; and as love expired, it reſumed its uſual tendency. The poliſhed manners of the gentleman decorated his behaviour with the faint gilding of civility, and ſoftened ſurly contempt into polite indifference: but affection was extinct, eſteem did not ſupply its place, and pride alone prompted him to give ſome degree of conſequence to the woman whom he had honoured with his name; when he treated her with occaſional complacency, and reſcued her from his mother's virulent malice.

Mrs. Clermont had adhered to her reſolution of diſmiſſing Patty, and ſhe, like moſt confidential ſervants, ungratefully revenged herſelf upon her lady's ſuppoſed unkindneſs, by diſcloſing all

the ſecrets with which ſhe had been intruſted. Miſs Milton's highly indiſcreet advice, and the irreſolute Marianne's weak compliance, were now known by every ſervant in the family; and Lady Clermont took care that her ſon ſhould *not* be ignorant that his wife had employed a ſpy upon his conduct. The breach now became irreparable. Lord Clermont's urgent deſire of having a Grandſon to inherit his eſtate, could ſcarce impoſe a temporary civility upon the enraged huſband; or prevent him from breaking forth into the moſt violent expoſtulations: while the inſidious mother, by appearing to plead for the poor, inexperienced, well-meaning, miſled young creature, effectually undermined every ſentiment of confidence and regard; and ſunk the unhappy Marianne into an object of pity, and perhaps contempt.

Mr. Clermont now determined to carry his wife back to Stannadine, where he reſolved ſhe ſhould in future conceal her folly in obſcurity. For himſelf, he intended

ſoon

ſoon to plunge into the buſtle of publick life, and endeavour to forget both the expectations and diſappointments of love. The ſtate of Mrs. Clermont's mind upon diſcovering that ſhe had loſt her huſband's heart, will not require explanation. It was wretchedneſs in the extreme. She tried to recal the dear unkind by tears, and ſoft complaints; but he always avoided the latter by leaving the room, and he had now too often ſeen the former to be affected by an April ſhower.

The hiſtory of Mrs. Clermont's married life, may teach ladies not to depend upon the durability of that evaneſcent affection which lovers feel. It may admoniſh their ſanguine adorers not to expect too much, nor yet to reject and deſpiſe what is amiable, becauſe it is not perfect. Perhaps I ſhall be cenſured for aſcribing the deſtruction of married happineſs to ſuch light cauſes; but I am willing to appeal to the experience of every wedded pair, whether *great* criminality on either

ſide is neceſſary, in order to render the bonds of Hymen a galling yoke of miſery. My mind is open to conviction, and if I have been wrong, I ſhall at leaſt acquire a more conſolatory proſpect of the happineſs of my fellow-creatures.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Integrity and duty are the cordials of affliction.

MY thirty-third chapter concluded with a letter from Miſs Dudley to her father, I ſhall begin this with his reply.

'It is not upon ſlight grounds and 'capricious motives, that I reject the in-'treaties of my dear child, ſo affectionately 'and earneſtly urged. I am influenced 'by a principle which I have venerated 'through the whole courſe of my life, 'and which I ought not to renounce in 'the cloſing ſcenes. I *know* when I have 'explained myſelf, you will have the 'greatneſs of ſoul to approve my conduct.

'But I muſt firſt inform you of an 'incident which has deeply afflicted me. 'Mr. Tonnereau yeſterday diſgracefully 'terminated his exiſtence by his own 'hands. Unhappy man! He found that 'ſome of his creditors were reſolutely bent 'to expoſe his conduct, and to puſh their 'diſcoveries to the utmoſt extremity. He 'knew that his guilt was ſo far developed, 'that no ſubterfuge could avail; and he 'dreaded the auſterity of thoſe laws which 'he had provoked. He trembled at the '*vengeance* of man, but he did not fear to 'brave that of God!

'You know, Louiſa, how much I once 'eſteemed him. He was the friend of 'my early youth, and for many years I 'can *affirm* that his conduct was formed 'upon principles of honeſt induſtry. I 'am aſſured that latterly he conſiderably 'deviated from the auſpicious commence-'ment of his life. He has been diſſipated 'and extravagant, and then to redeem his 'tottering credit, he has applied to the

'dangerous reſources of the gaming-
'table.

'When I conſider this man's laſt ſcenes
'of life, can I term my own ſituation
'unfortunate? Deſerted by the licen-
'tious companions of his follies; juſtly
'execrated by thoſe injured people, who
'(though once his friends) now con-
'ſider their acquaintance with him as the
'moſt diſaſtrous circumſtance of their
'lives; his character held up by thoſe
'who are ſtrangers to his perſon, as a
'mark of abhorrence and infamy; alone
'in a priſon, deſtitute of the comforts
'of life, though till then accuſtomed to
'its ſuperfluities; no one near him, but
'a mercenary attendant, callous through
'familiarity with miſery; no eye to pity
'his ſorrows; no friendly boſom on which
'to repoſe his griefs; his own reflections
'his worſt enemies; and even deſpairing
'of mercy from the fountain of goodneſs.
'Unhappy Tonnereau! I pity thee too
'much to hate thee.

'But

'But let me recollect myſelf. Since I 'have been in London, I have taken an 'inventory of my effects, and find they 'will not be ſufficient to diſcharge the 'debts which I contracted, with, as I 'thought, full ability of payment. Inte-'grity is no leſs the character of an 'Engliſh merchant than enterpriſe; nor 'can I willingly renounce the glorious 'boaſt which I have hitherto enjoyed, of 'having never injured any one, in per-'ſon or property. I cannot retain it, 'if I neglect any probable opportunity 'of recovering enough of my fortune to 'ſatisfy every legal claim upon me. 'The infirmities of the body may inter-'rupt the ſoul in the exertion of its 'ſublime ſpeculative functions; but they 'never ought to impede us in the per-'formance of poſitive duties, unleſs by 'impoſing total inability. I have not 'long to live, my dear, even according 'to the courſe of nature; and lately I 'have been frequently unwell. A ſea-'voyage may be of ſervice to me, but

'ſuppoſing the worſt, what is the loſs
'of a few months of painful exiſtence,
'to the pleaſure of reflecting in my laſt
'hours, that by ſacrificing it, no injured
'orphan or widow has cauſe to curſe my
'aſhes; and that I have prevented my
'children from being followed by the
'clamours of my defrauded creditors?

'Mr. Pelham has received intelligence
'by means of the Ambaſſador, that the
'Council of the Indies have admitted
'the legality of my claims, and as ſoon
'as I appear perſonally to identify them,
'the value of my part of the ſhip's
'cargo will be punctually paid. I am
'determined to take my paſſage on board
'of the firſt packet that ſails for Corunna.
'I ſhall not decline the kind offer of
'your company, for the complaint in my
'ſide is at times very troubleſome; it
'often affects my breath, but when my
'dear nurſe is with me I ſhall be better.
'Set out, my love, as ſoon as you receive
'this. I am ſtill with my friend, nor can
'I offer to change my reſidence during

'the

'the ſhort ſtay we ſhall make in London,
'without offending him. His aunt, Mrs.
'Penelope Pelham, is deſirous to be ac-
'quainted with you. She is a little
'ſingular, but upon the whole a worthy
'woman. I will promiſe you a moſt
'affectionate reception from Mr. Pelham.
'Let us know when you ſet out, and
'we will meet you at the laſt ſtage.
'Adieu, haſten to the arms of your

'Affectionate father,

'RICHARD DUDLEY.'

In little more than a week from the receipt of this letter Miſs Dudley arranged her affairs at Seatondell, preparatory to an abſence of ſome months, and finiſhed a journey from Lancaſhire to London. It was part of her character to form her plans with propriety, and to execute them with diſpatch. I therefore forbid any conjectures as to the effect the promiſed *affectionate* reception from Mr. Pelham might have upon her expedition. Deſirous to ſurpriſe her father with her ſpeed, ſhe forbore to ſend any intelligence

of her motions, but wiſhed to be the agreeable herald of her own arrival. An accident which happened during the laſt day's journey, detained her upon the road, and ſhe did not arrive at Portland-Place till near midnight. She ſent in her name, and Mr. Pelham immediately appeared to conduct her from the carriage. Her heart throbbed with the livelieſt tranſport, and a crimſon bluſh irradiated her countenance; but he received her with a ſolemn embarraſſed air, and led her almoſt without ſpeaking to his Aunt. My friend, Mrs. Penelope, might, both in perſon and manner, be termed a brief abſtract of our ſiſterhood; ſhe moved by rule, and ſpoke in a meaſured cadence. The cold formality of her welcome added to poor Louiſa's chagrin, ſhe ventured to turn her eyes upon Mr. Pelham, his were fixed upon the ground. Was this the promiſed reception? Did "that ſun of benignity which ſhone in his countenance," to adopt an expreſſion of her father's, ſhine on all but her? Was

it

it poſſible for *her* to have diſpleaſed him, or had ſhe by the pleaſure ſhe ſhewed at ſeeing him, unguardedly diſcovered the ſecret of her heart?

After a few faint efforts to ſupport ceremonious converſation, Mr. Pelham with heſitation ſaid, he would go and acquaint Mr. Dudley of his daughter's arrival. Louiſa recollecting her father's early habits, to which ſince his indiſpoſition he had ſtrictly adhered, obſerved the lateneſs of the hour, and begged that he might not be informed till morning.

Mr. Pelham gravely replied, he was afraid his friend was not aſleep. A thouſand diſtracting fears ruſhed into Miſs Dudley's mind. She recollected that her queſtions reſpecting her father's health had been evaſively anſwered. She ſtarted from her chair, and with a look of inexpreſſible alarm, laid her hand involuntarily upon Mr. Pelham's, and conjured him not to deceive her; ſhe knew her father was worſe than uſual.

"He is indeed," replied Mr. Pelham, holding her trembling hand. "I need not aſſure you that I take the moſt lively intereſt in his ſafety. We have called in Dr. L. You have probably heard of his medical reputation, but I hope moſt from your preſence. Your father's anxiety to ſee you has conſiderably aggravated his diſeaſe. Be calm, dear Madam, I beſeech you. We have by no means abandoned hope."

"When was he ſeized?"

"He has been evidently unwell ever ſince he has been with us; and I have ſometimes drawn from him a reluctant complaint, that the diſorder in his ſide was at times inſupportably painful. I fear the uneaſineſs of his mind has encreaſed his diſeaſe; and the dreadful criminality of Tonnereau's death gave him a ſhock, which has haſtened the criſis. He has been confined to his bed theſe three days. He is now extremely feveriſh. We fear an abſceſs is forming."

Unable

Unable to ſupport the painful intelligence, Louiſa ſunk into her chair. "Nephew," ſaid Mrs. Penelope, as ſhe advanced, holding out her ſalts, "do not keep the lady in ſuſpence. You ought to tell her the worſt at firſt. Your papa, Madam, is quite given up by Dr. L. and I am very glad he has done with him, for *I* never liked his preſcriptions, and I hope you will now perſuade Mr. Dudley to try an invaluable medicine, which I have often adminiſtered, and never knew it fail of effect. Mr. Pelham knows that he owes his life to it."

Louiſa could only reply by a flood of tears. A ſalutary relief to her big ſwoln heart. Her head dropped almoſt lifeleſs upon Mrs. Penelope's boſom, who, whilſt buſily employed in rubbing her temples, and adminiſtering pungent reſtoratives; alternately cenſured her want of fortitude, and commended her affection; aggravated Mr. Dudley's danger, and comforted her by the aſſurance, that

while life remained, her recipe would prove infallible.

The natural firmneſs of Miſs Dudley's mind was perhaps more conducive to her recovering her wonted calm, than my good friend's oratory. She dried her tears, and thanking her with an air of mild benignity for her attention, intreated that ſhe might ſee her father immediately. "While my mind," added ſhe emphatically, "can exert its recovered ſtrength."

Mr. Pelham's generous heart melted with compaſſion. He withdrew to apprize his friend, that "the fond darling of his ſoul," as he ſtyled her, was arrived. Mrs. Penelope had now a fair opportunity for deſcribing the cures effected by her noſtrum; but I am afraid ſhe had not an attentive auditor, for at the moſt intereſting period of her narrative, Louiſa received the expected ſummons, and obeyed it as faſt as her trembling limbs would permit. She drew aſide the curtains with eager impatience. Her father, ſupported by Mr. Pelham, had raiſed himſelf

himſelf upon his elbow; and he welcomed her with a penetrating ſmile. "My dear nurſe is come to take care of me," ſaid he. "I have been too impatient, love, for thy arrival. Come to my arms. Reſtoration hangs upon thy lips."

His emaciated countenance, and the laborious weakneſs of his voice, ſhook his daughter's fortitude. She hung over him in ſilence, and bathed his pallid cheek with tears.

"Do not alarm thyſelf ſo much," continued Mr. Dudley, "My danger is not ſo imminent. My worthy friends here are too anxiouſly ſolicitous, too apprehenſive. Recollect yourſelf, my child. I expect conſolation from your ſociety. You are to enable me to ſuffer."

"Oh!" the tortured Louiſa was tempted to exclaim; "who will conſole, who will ſupport me? In what aſylum ſhall *I* hide my orphan-head? Gracious Heaven! deprive me not of my only friend and protector?" Her native piety recalled her thoughts from this melancholy excurſion.

excurſion. She recollected the endearing titles of "friend of the friendleſs," and "father of the fatherleſs," which the great author of creation had deigned to aſſume; and her ſoul firmly anchored upon the rock of ages.

CHAP. XXXVII.

An inſtance of the ſtrong intereſt which dignified diſtreſs can excite.

NO ſooner had Miſs Dudley recovered ſufficient ſtrength to look beyond the gloom of a temporary parting, than a ſerene ſmile diffuſed itſelf over her countenance. She now fixed her eyes ſteadily upon her admirable father, and with awful pleaſure contemplated the undiminiſhed glory of the never-dying intellectual power, which beamed forth with ſuperior ſplendor from under the ruins of the tottering mortal fabrick. Though her countenance was not regularly beautiful, it generally attracted admiration from

from being an expreſſive index of the excellence of her heart. Her compoſed tenderneſs and dignified patience did not now eſcape the attention of an accurate judge of character and manners.

Mr. Dudley raiſed his eyes to the amiable youth, who ſtill ſupported him. "Thank you, my dear Pelham," ſaid he, "now lay me gently down upon my pillow. I hope to have a good night, and will diſmiſs you all."

"Miſs Dudley," returned he, "muſt be fatigued with her journey; but I muſt inſiſt upon watching you to-night. To-morrow morning I will reſign you to her cares."

"I am not ſenſible of the leaſt fatigue;" replied Louiſa, "and you know we *profeſſed* nurſes always ſleep beſt in our patient's apartment. I ſhall be able to repoſe myſelf in that arm-chair, and if my father appears eaſy, enjoy a very comfortable night."

"We muſt yield to her in this point," ſaid Mr. Dudley. "The dear girl is very

very tenacious of her opinion, and will not conſider my medicines to be efficacious, unleſs I receive them from her hands. Beſides we muſt ſettle the plan of our voyage. Good night, Pelham, do not fail to enquire when the next packet will be ready; for we muſt not expect to take our paſſage in that which is now under ſailing orders."

Mr. Pelham withdrew in ſilence, with his heart divided between grief and admiration. Mr. Dudley's anguiſh not permitting him to lie compoſed, he affected a degree of ſprightlineſs, and enquired after his plantations and improvements, with the intereſted curioſity of one who hoped to ſee them riſe to perfection. At intervals he talked of their intended expedition; and deſcribed the natural advantages of Spain, and the auſtere manners of its haughty indolent inhabitants, from obſervations which he had made in a former journey to that kingdom. His diſcourſe was merely intended to confirm his daughter's agitated ſpirits, for

he

he felt *certain* that he ſhould never ſet out for any other country, but that from which no traveller returns.

Thus paſſed the night;—in the morning Dr. L. came to make what he termed a friendly, inſtead of a profeſſional viſit. Mr. Dudley underſtood the diſtinction. He wiſhed to aſk ſome queſtions, but was interrupted by Mrs. Penelope, who came again to urge the propriety of adminiſtering her infallible medicine. Dr. L. on being conſulted, owned the patient was in a ſtate to admit of hazardous experiments, and withdrew, promiſing to call again in the evening.

Mrs. Penelope might now be ſaid to enjoy her full importance. Every domeſtick was employed to procure or prepare the reſpective ingredients, which ſhe mixed with her own hands, according to the preſcribed rule. She at length approached Mr. Dudley's bedſide with the celebrated compound, but whether like Circe with the poiſonous chalice,

chalice, or like Hygeia with the reſtorative cup, the event will determine.

The immediate effect certainly did not realize her ſanguine expectations. Perhaps Mr. Dudley's ſtrength was too far exhauſted; or he might want *faith*, which I am told is a neceſſary auxiliary in this claſs of remedies; for they often lie *dormant*, unleſs quickened by a ſort of reaction in the patient's mind; or the herbs might not be gathered at the right period of the moon, whoſe influence in pharmacy is unqueſtionable. I will not dare to arraign the infallibility of the recipe, but will only ſtate, that Mr. Dudley appeared conſiderably worſe after the operation, in the opinion of every body but Mrs. Penelope; who, having the ſame *faith* in her preparation as Don Quixote had in the balſam of Firebraſs, perceived ſtrong ſymptoms of immediate recovery. She retired exulting in her phyſical knowledge, to enjoy the pleaſure of a pool at Tredrille, with two ſelect friends.

Dr.

Dr. L. did not confirm Mrs. Penelope's opinion at his evening viſit. Mr. Dudley had previouſly requeſted to be left alone with his phyſician; "I perceive, Sir," ſaid the exalted man, "that you are ſenſible I am much worſe, and I thank you for your explicit behaviour. I *could* not be deceived by common profeſſional forms, and you are too liberal to adopt them. I have ſeen enough of life to be willing to reſign it; but we are not called into exiſtence merely for ourſelves, and there are circumſtances which make me wiſh that I could at this time recover. Do you know of any experiment that has a chance of ſucceſs?"

The Dr. replied that an operation might be performed upon his ſide, but that it was excruciating and highly dangerous.

"I will ſubmit to it cheerfully," replied Mr. Dudley. "Let the ſurgeons attend me at five o'clock to-morrow morning. I do not wiſh for any of the family to be informed of it."

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In purſuance of this reſolution he anſwered every interrogatory with an aſſurance that he was much better, and diſpoſed to ſlumber. He perceived by Louiſa's eyes on her re-entering the room, that ſhe had diſcovered his increaſed danger, and he endeavoured to confirm her ſinking ſpirits by inſpiring a degree of falſe hope. "Do not, my love, intirely depend upon my phyſician's report; a ſick man is the beſt judge of his own feelings. I flatter myſelf that I ſhall have a comfortable night. Go early to bed, and you will be ſufficiently refreſhed to attend me in the morning. I ſhall compoſe myſelf with the thought that you are tranquil."

Miſs Dudley did not controvert this opinion. She tenderly wiſhed him a good night, and withdrew to her own apartment. Her breaking heart required ſome relief, and ſhe now recollected that, at her expreſs deſire, ſhe was lodged in a ſmall room ſeparated from her father's by a thin partition. She therefore haſtily left

left it, and took two or three turns in an adjoining ante-chamber, undetermined how to diſpoſe of herſelf for a few hours. If ſhe joined Mrs. Penelope's party, it would only be to receive felicitations, and to hear prognoſticks which her reaſon ſadly diſproved: or probably ſhe might be preſſed to take a hand at cards, as a ſure ſpecifick againſt melancholy. She had ever felt a tenderneſs for the prejudices and peculiarities of age; but at this time, her mind was in a ſtate to render "ſolitude the beſt ſociety."

She at length withdrew to the library, and endeavoured to relieve her dejection by applying to ſome of the treaſures with which it was ſtored. But wit had loſt its attick point, and elegance its forcible attraction. She could not follow an argument through its long train of deductions, and the beſt told narrative failed to intereſt her attention. She returned the books to their places, and after a minute's pauſe ſunk upon her knees. Grief has been termed the parent of elo-

quence,

quence;—it is peculiarly ſo in an informed well-regulated mind. She raiſed her eyes, the feelings of her agitated ſoul animated every impaſſioned feature. Her ſnowy hands remained claſped in anguiſh, and regardleſs of the tears which fell copiouſly upon them. In the warm flow of unſtudied elocution her lips expreſſed the piety of a ſeraph, chaſtiſed by the humble awe of a weak, dependent mortal. She ſupplicated Heaven to ſpare her father, her only friend and comfort; but ſhe aſked with ſubmiſſion. She painted an orphan's ſorrows; but not with the dark colourings of deſpair. Her mind appeared to gather ſtrength from her divine employment; her tears ceaſed to flow; a ſerene ſweetneſs beamed in her countenance, and when ſhe roſe from her knees to retire, her whole form ſeemed inſpired with ſupernatural intelligence; and expreſſed the moſt lively reſemblance of ſuperior beings which the human imagination can form.

Mr.

Mr. Pelham's apprehenſion for his friend having rendered him unfit for company, he had retired to ſpend his evening in a reading cloſet at the upper end of his library. His attention was drawn from his ſtudies by the ſound of a female voice. He ſtepped ſoftly to the door, and became an unobſerved ſpectator of the ſcene I have deſcribed. His ſenſations were in ſome reſpects ſimilar to thoſe expreſſed by Sir Eldred of the Bower;

"My ſcorn has oft the dart repell'd
"Which guileful beauty threw;
"But goodneſs heard, and grace beheld,
"Muſt every heart ſubdue."

After ſhe had withdrawn he returned into his cloſet, but even his favourite authors were now taſteleſs. The pleadings of Demoſthenes were ſtudied and artificial, when compared to the more lively oratory of a deeply-affected heart; nor did the morality of the divine Tully ſtrike the ſoul with ſuch ſtrong conviction

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in favour of the nobleſt virtues, as it received from the powerful example of youth and innocence.

He left his books, and walked to the table, againſt which Miſs Dudley had lately knelt: it was ſtill wet with her tears. There, bending over the marks of holy ſorrow, he recalled her image to his recollection. Even when his heart was moſt infatuated by the ſuperior brilliancy of Marianne's charms it had done juſtice to Louiſa's virtues. Time and abſence had blunted the pain of diſappointment, and gradually reconciled his mind to the loſs of his firſt love; but his attachment had been too ſtrong to permit him to form a ſecond choice, though every hope had been excluded by her marriage. He had too ſtrong ſenſe to yield to whining complaints, and he ſubmitted to a *ſevere mortification* with manly firmneſs; but whenever Fancy recalled to his mind any pleaſing ideas, the attracting image of Marianne Dudley roſe to his view, and the charms of other fair ones faded

faded at the compariſon. Yet even that faſcinating form ſeemed to yield to the ſuperiour lovelineſs of intellectual beauty, and he determined if poſſible to reſcue Louiſa from an orphan's woes, and to ſolicit the affections of ſo invaluable a woman.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

A circumſtance of awful Solemnity prepares the way for a very deſirable event.

MR. Dudley ſpent the night in agony, but his fortitude ſeemed to increaſe with his pains; and his deſire of not diſturbing his daughter, who, he found, lay near him, repreſſed the groan of anguiſh. The powers of his mind continued unimpaired; he felt his danger, and conſidering it poſſible that he might not ſurvive the intended operation, he deſired that Mr. Pelham might be called at an early hour. The worthy man flew to his apartment, but ſhocked at the viſible

change in his friend's countenance, he burſt into tears, which the dying hero thus reproved, "check this unmanly ſorrow, my good Sir; mine is no uncommon lot. I do but undergo the general law of nature, to which this world is ſubject. A world, mortal and periſhable like man its lord; I have many comforts, at times they predominate over my ſufferings; my ſoul is tranquil; I look forward to futurity with hope. I have only *one* trouble." "Confide it to me," ſaid Mr. Pelham, endeavouring to ſtifle his grief.

"Bleſſed be Heaven for a little interval of eaſe" reſumed Mr. Dudley; "I am perſuaded that you will exert your kind endeavours to procure that ſatisfaction to my family from the Spaniſh government, which I could not in perſon demand. The peculiar circumſtances of my ſtory muſt move attention, but ſhould you fail of ſucceſs, I commend my character to your care. Defend it from opprobrium; ſay that I was not intentionally unjuſt; unforeſeen incidents, a variety of misfortunes, all

all united to prevent the favourite wiſh of my heart. Thoſe whom I have injured will complain; endeavour to ſoften the aſperity of their complaints."

"Your memory," ſaid Mr. Pelham, claſping the hand of Mr. Dudley, "ſhall be as irreproachable as your life. I do not doubt but that ample juſtice will be done you, yet if it ſhould be withheld, I will make myſelf your *executor*. I know the amount of your debts; calm your worthy heart; were they double the ſum, I would with pleaſure diſcharge them."

"You are too good, too generous; I aſked not this; I expected it not; your kindneſs pains me." Mr. Dudley ſunk upon his pillow, and remained ſilent a few moments.

The ſurgeons now entered, he opened his eyes and welcomed them with a ſlight motion of his hand, "I have ſome private buſineſs," ſaid he, "go, dear Pelham, leave me a little while; if I am worſe I will ſend for you." "Gentlemen," reſumed Mr. Dudley, when every thing was pre-

pared, "I am afraid your intended aſſiſtance will not ſucceed; I am much weakened by a bad night; but act as you think beſt. I am ready, my mind is collected. Yet if you think I ſhall not ſurvive the operation, I would firſt ſee my daughter."

On hearing theſe words, Miſs Dudley ruſhed into the room; her anxiety had only permitted her to throw herſelf upon the bed, from which ſhe had frequently riſen during the night, and with laudable curioſity haſtened to hear if any groans proceeded from her father's chamber. From the ſilence which prevailed there, ſhe had compoſed herſelf with the thought that Mrs. Penelope's hopes were not entirely viſionary. The ſound of ſtrange voices which ſhe imperfectly heard, had cleared away her broken ſlumbers, and her father's words hurried her into the room in an agony.

The principal ſurgeon humanely endeavoured to conſole her. He perſuaded her that opening the ulcer in the ſide might be attended

attended with ſalutary conſequences. "Let me ſtay then," ſaid ſhe, "while it is performed; I can rub his temples: I know I can be of ſervice." "Retire my love," ſaid Mr. Dudley; "Your preſence would overpower me. If I faint you ſhall be ſummoned." Louiſa claſped her pious hands in mental prayer, and withdrew.

The ſurgeons now examined their patient, and unanimouſly declared, that from *preſent* appearances the propoſed inciſion muſt be declined. No good could poſſibly ariſe from it, a mortification having already taken place.

"I am ſenſible," ſaid the heroick object of their care, "that nothing can *now* be done for me. I thank you for your humane attention;—yet if you can inform me how long I may continue to ſuffer."—

"Your ſufferings, Sir," ſaid one of them, "will very ſpeedily terminate, but you may live ſeveral hours."

Mr. Dudley waved his hand, and they withdrew in tears.

He now reſolved to prepare his ſoul

by the moſt ſolemn chriſtian duties for its expected journey. Previous to the clergyman's arrival, Mr. Pelham ſeated himſelf beſide the bed of death, loſt in ſorrow, and inſenſible to the frequent ſobs which proceeded from Louiſa's apartment.

Mr. Dudley preſſed his hand; "Comfort my child, dear amiable friend, comfort my forlorn Louiſa: a ſingular attachment ſubſiſted between us, it was more than the tie of blood. She was my adviſer, my comforter, my companion, my friend; our taſtes, our habits, our deſires correſponded. I am not anxious *now* reſpecting her fortune. I know that ſhe has ſufficient greatneſs of ſoul to dignify narrow circumſtances by cheerful patience; but my loſs will ſit heavy upon her heart, conſole her as a *friend*, and if the weakneſs of her ſex ſhould expoſe her to injury, be her *protector*."

"My heart," ſaid Pelham, ſinking upon his knees, "aſpires to a more ſacred title. Ever ſince I knew *you* it has panted to be allied to your virtues; diſappointed in the

the object of my youthful love, I have with matureſt judgment formed a ſecond attachment. You once promiſed me your Marianne, I now aſk for *your Louiſa.*"

"Gracious heaven!" cried Mr. Dudley, raiſing himſelf up, and with an energetick voice which ſeemed to intimate recovered health and ſtrength, "but did I underſtand you rightly? Do you indeed love my Louiſa?"

"Even when I was her ſiſter's adorer, I honoured her character, and eſteemed her virtues; they now blaze upon me with invincible ſplendor. The delicacy of her ſentiments may induce her to reject a man who confeſſes a prior attachment. Support my pretenſions by your conſent, and reſt aſſured my preſent love is ſincere and ardent. The exalted Louiſa may be influenced in favour of a paſſion which *you* have approved.

"Son of my ſoul," exclaimed Mr. Dudley, ſtretching out his arms, "come to my heart, and let it tell thee that all its *ſecret wiſhes* are *now* fulfilled." Go and call

my darling to me. How bliſsful are my departing moments!" Mr. Pelham withdrew.

Miſs Dudley haſtily threw herſelf into her father's arms. "You ſeem," ſaid ſhe, bending over him in meek affliction, "to be ſomewhat revived." "I am, my child. I thought my blood had ſtagnated, but joy has quickened the languid current. Why did I deſpair, or think thy merit could paſs unnoticed? My Louiſa, the worthy Pelham loves thee. Canſt thou reward thy father's generous friend? He has aſked me to beſtow my only treaſure upon him. I have not many moments to loſe. Speak, my love, wilt thou be his? Away with that reſerve which keeps thy *dying* father in ſuſpence, on the only ſubject which intereſts him upon earth."

No language could do juſtice to Miſs Dudley's feelings. Grief and ſurpriſe, gratitude and love, were elevated to a painful extreme. She was told that the paſſion which had long been an unobſerved

ſerved but penſive inmate of her boſom, at length had met a reciprocal return. She was even called upon to confeſs the affection which virgin modeſty had concealed. But by whom, and in what circumſtances was ſhe urged to this diſcloſure?

Thrice ſhe attempted to ſpeak, and thrice the wild palpitations of her heart forbade her utterance. At length ſhe faintly exclaimed, "I have long eſteemed him—loved him I ſhould ſay. But oh, my father, at what a moment do you claim this confeſſion."

"At a bliſsful one, dear delight of my ſoul! It is a moment which ſends a joyful pilgrim back to his native country, and ſeals the happineſs of two kindred minds. Pelham, my humane, generous, noble ſon, where art thou? Come and receive this bleſſing from my arms, while they have yet ſtrength to beſtow her on thee."

Mr. Pelham, who from motives of the pureſt delicacy was abſent at this eclairciſſement, entered at the welcome

ſummons. Mr. Dudley held his daughter's hand, between his numbed and clammy palms, and raiſing his eyes with patriarchal dignity, thus beſtowed her on her kneeling lover. "I give her to thee, a dear and ſolemn truſt. Look down Gracious Creator and bleſs this worthy pair. Give them long life, love, and temporal felicity: and let their laſt moments enjoy the holy tranſport, the divine beatitude which I now enjoy."

Louiſa ſunk in ſpeechleſs anguiſh as he ſpoke, Mr. Pelham ſupported her. His fond attentions recalled her fluttering ſenſes. "Spare, oh ſpare, every expreſſion of love and tranſport," ſaid ſhe. "My heart is entirely yours, but I can now attend to nothing but my father."

A ſerene, elevated ſmile, expreſſive of intellectual tranſport, beamed in Mr. Dudley's face. His agonies ſubſided. Inſtead of reſtleſs toſſings and convulſive ſtarts, he remained placidly compoſed. He received the moſt ſacred rite of chriſt-

chriſtianity with his beloved daughter and adopted ſon. As he taſted the conſecrated chalice he again bleſſed them, the abſent Marianne and Mr. Clermont. He repeated to Louiſa a parting charge for her ſiſter; then ſinking into a languid ſtate, he dozed at intervals till the evening, when again calling his daughter to him, he drew his laſt breath in her arms.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Includes a greater portion of time than all the preceding narrative.

MISS Dudley, reſtraining her grief with ſentiments of reverend awe, forbore to interrupt the departing ſoul. When the quivering pulſe had ſtopped ſome moments, ſhe preſſed with pallid lips the honoured remains; and committing the corpſe to the care of the attendants, with a requeſt that every thing ſhould be conducted with propriety, retired to her apartment.

Mr. Pelham followed her, he intended to have offered ſome topick of conſolation, but his faultering voice diſappointed his deſign, and he could only intreat her not to indulge her ſorrow, leſt it ſhould affect her health. "In heart and in ſoul I reſign him to his God," ſaid the exalted mourner. "Ought I to ſink in deſpair, becauſe my beloved father is become an inhabitant of a better world? Yet allow me, Sir, to vent in privacy the fond regrets of nature, I wiſh to offer my firſt ſorrows to my Maker; I truſt he will enable me to ſupport them."

Mr. Pelham acquieſced; but Mrs. Penelope was firmly of opinion that the young lady ought not to be left alone. It was expected my old friend's ſurpriſe at hearing Mr. Dudley was *really* dead, would be very great, as ſhe even to the laſt perceived increaſing marks of his amendment: but ſhe happily recollected that ſhe had adminiſtered her medicine *too* ſoon after Dr. L.'s laſt preſcription,

for her potion to exert its wonted efficacy. She now offered to viſit Miſs Dudley, and to talk her out of her melancholy, by arguments drawn from her favorite aphoriſms, that "what muſt be will be," and "that Fate muſt govern all things," but Mr. Pelham reſpected the ſanctity of his Louiſa's ſorrows, and inſiſted that they ſhould not be diſturbed.

From the time of her father's death, till every thing was prepared for his funeral; Miſs Dudley never left her chamber, except twice a day to viſit the corpſe. There kneeling by the coffin, ſhe poured forth the fulneſs of her affectionate grateful heart. There ſhe accuſtomed herſelf to recollect all the invaluable precepts ſhe had received from him, reſpecting her conduct in life, and leſt her memory ſhould fail, ſhe committed them to writing. "Theſe my father," ſaid ſhe, apoſtrophiſing to his ſpirit, which ſhe ſublimely fancied ever preſent with her, "Theſe, thy elevated ſentiments ſhall ſpeak to me and conſole me, though

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the inſtructive voice which uttered them is mute, and the heart which prompted them, no longer beats at thy highly favored child's approach. Yet let me reflect, though theſe eyes ſhine not upon me, they will no longer melt into tears; the human affections are indeed extinct; but ſorrow will not come nigh thee. Thy tongue will never more conſole or inſtruct me, but the language of complaint has ceaſed for ever. Thine, my father, was an uneaſy pilgrimage for thee, the change is bleſſed, therefore I will not mourn."

I will forbear from any further repetition of thoſe ſentiments of pious ſorrow, by which Louiſa and her worthy admirer expreſſed their unaffected grief. They were elevated and devout, and a feeling mind may eaſily conceive them. Nor will I circumſtantially deſcribe Mr. Pelham's behaviour, which was all that eſteem, ſympathy, and delicacy could prompt. The corpſe was conveyed to Alderſon manor, and interred in the family vault, cloſe by Mrs. Dudley's coffin.

coffin. Mr. Pelham attended Louiſa on this ſad occaſion, and Mr. Clermont met her at the grave. Marianne could not join in the ſolemn obſequies. The intelligence of her father's danger, unwarily communicated, was more than her weakened ſpirits could ſupport. A premature confinement was the conſequence of the ſhock, by which not only Lord Clermont's anxious expectations of an heir were fruſtrated, but her own life was endangered, and the affections of her huſband further alienated.

Hitherto the behaviour of Mr. Pelham had been more indicative of the friend than the lover. He endeavoured to divert her grief by reſpectful attentions, or to ſoothe it by ſympathiſing in her loſs; rather than to interrupt the train of her thoughts by unſeaſonable anticipations of expected happineſs. At parting, reciprocal marks of tender regard appeared in each. He requeſted permiſſion to write to her, which ſhe readily granted; and while ſhe accompanied Mr. Clermont

to

to Stannadine, ſhe perceived that all her livelieſt affections were not buried in her father's grave.

The interview between the ſiſters, preſented a ſcene ſtrikingly intereſting.

The lovely form of Marianne, faded by ſickneſs and diſtreſs, was ſupported by the amiable Louiſa; who bending over her with matronly tenderneſs; joined in regret for a dear father's loſs, and with firmer but not leſs feeling heart, recapitulated the affecting narrative of his ſickneſs and death. Mrs. Clermont bitterly bewailed her abſence; "and did he not" ſaid ſhe, "reproach his abſent Marianne, and aſk why ſhe did not come to ſmooth the bed of death, and to wipe the faint dews from his honoured face? And you too, my Louiſa, muſt ſurely condemn your unfeeling ſiſter, for not haſtening to aſſiſt you in thoſe pious offices."

"I have *too* long known the virtues of that tender heart to doubt that ſome cruel neceſſity detained you from us. As for our father, unkind ſuſpicion had no part in

in his character. Almoſt the laſt words which he ſpake were a prayer for you. Give, ſaid he, emphatically, my dying bleſſing to my dear affectionate Marianne; and thou, all gracious Heaven, preſerve her from real ſorrow, and leſſen her ſenſe of the ſmaller evils of life. Bleſs Mr. Clermont too, and grant them many years of proſperity and *mutual* love."

"Vain were thoſe pious prayers," cried Mrs. Clermont in an agony; "and yet they ſometimes ſay the good man's dying wiſhes are fulfilled." She then related what a lamentable change had taken place in her huſband's behaviour; Miſs Dudley was diſtreſſed at the recital; yet ſhe felt willing to hope that a too lively imagination had as uſual aggravated the ſombre lines of life; but her own obſervation during her ſtay at Stannadine fatally confirmed the fidelity of the portrait.

She now exerted all the ſympathizing tenderneſs of her temper, and all the ſtrong powers of her calm diſcretion, to ſupport and

and conſole the mourner. She endeavoured to divert her from her own misfortunes by the exertion of thoſe benevolent and active duties from which ſhe had formerly derived pleaſure. But the *ſpring* of Mrs. Clermont's mind was entirely broken. She pitied the diſtreſs of the poor, and when an object was *pointed* out, was willing to relieve them, but ſhe had not vigour of ſoul ſufficient to ſtep out of herſelf, and to take a lively intereſt in the ſorrows of others; her early and ſevere diſappointment preyed upon her heart; ſhe no longer felt any inclination for amuſement, or any deſire to excel, and her thoughts continually wandered within the gloomy pale of her own calamity.

Mr. Clermont (now commenced a man of the world) wandered from one place of publick reſort to another; in purſuit of that fleeting happineſs which ſtill eluded his graſp. When diſappointed he returned home; but it was only to contraſt the *increaſed* penſiveneſs of his wife's behaviour

viour with the gay ſcenes he had juſt forſaken, and he derived from her conduct a freſh deſire to enjoy them.

Miſs Dudley deeply felt for her ſiſter's woes; but it was her *only* affliction. Her own proſpects were peculiarly brilliant. Mr. Pelham's letters were dictated by that manly tenderneſs which ſhone in all his conduct; they were affectionate without inſipidity, and polite without flattery. In one of them he informed her, that her buſineſs with the Spaniſh government was amicably ſettled; the whole property remitted to England, her father's debts diſcharged; and a ſurplus of five thouſand pounds left at her diſpoſal. "I rejoice at this event, ſaid he, "as it will prevent your generous mind from feeling the pain of *ſuppoſed* obligation. And yet, my Louiſa, ſhould little pecuniary affairs ever diſturb the felicity of *thoſe* lovers, who are ſo happy as to be able to boaſt on *one* ſide elegant competence, and on the *other* tranſcendent worth?"

If Mr. Pelham had doubted as to the

actual

actual transfer of his heart from its *once* dear object, the ſenſations he experienced on reviſiting Stannadine would have convinced him; he beheld the beauty of Mrs. Clermont withering under the worm of diſcontent, her features contracted by peeviſh melancholy, and her temper rendered irritable by diſappointment. Though ſuch an object moved his pity, admiration and love could only be awakened by the mild intelligence and unruffled ſweetneſs of a Louiſa. His impatience to call the meek-eyed angel his would ſcarcely permit him to wait the expiration of the twelve months, which ſhe had devoted to the robes of mourning. At length the amiable pair plighted their mutual vows.

Immediately after their nuptials, Mr. Pelham conducted his bride to his country ſeat. As he led her the tour of his pleaſure grounds, ſhe was particularly pleaſed with a long avenue of majeſtick oaks, ſloping down the declivity of a hill, on the ſummit of which a fine Dorick temple was dedicated to Integrity and

Forti-

Fortitude. Mrs. Pelham admired the attick ſimplicity of the appropriate emblems; but her attention was ſuddenly arreſted by one object *ſuperlatively* intereſting; a fine buſt of her father in white marble, was placed at the upper end of the building, and on a beautiful Etruſcan urn under it, ſhe read the following inſcription:

Here, as to firm Integrity we kneel,
And light to Fortitude the votive flame,
Thy memory, Dudley! animates our zeal,
And purer ardours kindle at thy name.

Here, when we mourn the father and the friend,
Hope ſhall the funeral pall of ſorrow raiſe;
And ſelfiſh Grief its lamentations end,
Thy life to copy, and thy death to praiſe.

Here, if we faint beneath the taſk of life,
Thy bright example ſhall new force ſupply;
Arm our weak ſouls for renovated ſtrife,
And point our juſt ambition to the ſky.

Oh ever lov'd! while o'er thy ſacred earth
Affection graves thy deeds, and drops a tear;
Our future lives ſhall emulate thy worth:
Our future virtues prove that thou wert dear.

Mr.

Mr. Pelham thus tenderly addreſſed her when ſhe had recovered from her firſt emotion. "I propoſe myſelf many delightful hours in this tranquil retreat. Here, my Louiſa, we will often retire to hold communications with our own hearts, and to form a juſt eſtimate of life. We will not ſurvey its *little ſorrows* through the gloom of miſanthropy, nor will we judge of its *pleaſures* from the colourings of enthuſiaſm. We will recollect your father's precepts, and conſider it as a chequered ſcene, from which the virtuous well regulated mind may derive many advantages. Here we will converſe with that ever-reſpected man; we will feaſt our eyes with gazing upon his features, and our minds by recalling the *nobler* likeneſs of the informing ſoul. We will think of him, not with that uſeleſs regret which ends in penſive melancholy, much leſs with that bold ſorrow which audaciouſly dares to queſtion Providence; but our remembrance ſhall tend to meliorate our own hearts, and our love prompt us to exerciſe

exercise those virtues which have glorified him, and will exalt us to equal happiness. Should any little error in the conduct of either, give pain to the susceptibility of fond attachment, here we will come, and fancy that marble animated, and that it repeats the excellent observations we have so often heard: *That imperfection is always with human virtues, and infelicity with human bliss.*"

CHAP. XL.

The conclusion. Mrs. Prudentia ceremoniously takes leave of all her characters.

I HAVE now brought my narrative to a period, but as Swift observes, that no well bred modern author will omit the conclusion; I willingly subjoin one.

I once intended to have adopted supplicatory addresses to the candour and generosity of my *gentle* readers; but recollecting that there has *lately* been an uncommon demand for these qualities,

and apprehending they muſt have been entirely worn out in the ſervice of my ſiſter noveliſts. I am under a neceſſity of depending upon the taſte and diſcernment of the age, without even advancing the uſual pleas of little leiſure and painful interruptions. Indeed I am afraid readers care little about an author's private hiſtory, and after all the civil things we *can* ſay, only appreciate our merit by our ability to entertain and inſtruct *them*. Therefore, inſtead of obtruding myſelf upon the publick, the remaining pages ſhall be employed in deſcribing the *preſent* ſituation of my principal characters.

Nearly three years have elapſed ſince Miſs Dudley gave her hand to Mr. Pelham, and the enamoured huſband *ſtill* conſiders that event as the happieſt of his life. She has fanned the torch of Love with ſuch admirable dexterity, that it continues to burn with a calm ſteady flame; and with ſo little diminution of its priſtine brightneſs, that Mr. Pelham

is

is celebrated by all who know him, for being a polite, tender huſband, to an unaſſuming wife. Her character riſes in his eſtimation every hour, and ſhe often ſurpriſes him by the diſcovery of ſome new virtue, or graceful accompliſhment; which unobtruſive delicacy had hitherto concealed from his obſervation. Her excellent judgment, tempered by cheerful affability, induces him to confide in her as a friend, and to admire her as a companion; his high opinion of the ſuperiority of *her* conduct prompts him to be more obſervant of his *own*, and to guard with ſcrupulous care againſt his natural infirmities, leſt they ſhould prejudice him in her eſteem. He is now acquainted with the preference which his Louiſa felt for him, during the time of his attachment to Mrs. Clermont; and his greatneſs of ſoul induces him to admire the delicacy, that ſo cloſely concealed it from every eye, and the generoſity, that reſolved by conqering it to

ſacrifice every ſelfiſh wiſh to the good of others.

Mrs. Penelope Pelham who was extremely averſe to her nephew's connection with Miſs Dudley, from a perſuaſion that he was deſerving of a Ducheſs, and at laſt conſented to the marriage becauſe there is a fate in theſe things which cannot be withſtood; is now completely reconciled.

She reſides with the young couple, not only to ſee that every thing goes on right, but alſo to pleaſe Mr. Pelham, who ſhe is convinced could not be happy without her. We have correſponded ſeveral years.

Her letters are now generally filled with the witticiſms of maſter Pelham, who is juſt twenty months old, and by her account a prodigy. She ſometimes ſpeaks of her niece, allows her to be an obliging good tempered young woman, and ſo well informed in houſekeeping, that Mrs. Penelope has yielded the family affairs

affairs to her management, and they are now almoſt as well conducted as when ſhe herſelf preſided. She mentions amongſt her niece's perfections, that ſhe is an excellent milliner, and makes "mighty becoming bonnets" for ladies who are not very young. She has alſo learned to play at Tredrille.

Louiſa has not deſerted Seatondell. Indeed ſhe is particularly attached to the little farm, which afforded an aſylum to herſelf and her father in their adverſity; and which was planted and decorated under his directions. Mrs. Arby, and the reſt of the neighbours are "prodigiouſly proud" when ſhe honours them with a viſit, and they diſcover many excellencies in Mrs. Pelham, which they overlooked in Louiſa Dudley. I find ſhe has enlarged the charitable inſtitutions which ſhe formerly founded, and it gives me particular pleaſure to hear that Mr. Pelham has made poor Walden tolerably happy, by preſenting him with a living.

Mr. Clermont is become a peer by his father's death, but the acquiſition of a title has not contributed to his repoſe. The late Lord's ſentiments in politicks were ſo violently in oppoſition to government, that they have operated as an antidote to his ſon; who being tired of the inſipidity of a faſhionable life, has entered into adminiſtration, with the ſanguine hope of having *now* found the long-deſired good. His features have acquired a caſt of myſtery, and his frank impaſſioned manner is changed into reſerve and importance. He ſometimes pays a ſhort viſit to his Lady at the Park, who welcomes him with tears, and endeavours to detain him by complaints. Her time paſſes very uncomfortably. She has in a great degree ſecluded herſelf from ſociety, ſome of her neighbours ſay ſhe is deranged, others think her intolerably proud; all blame her for living unhappily with a handſome, generous, well-behaved huſband. Few can underſtand her ſorrows, and fewer have

courage

courage to ſtem the torrent of publick opinion by pitying them.

The Dowager Lady Clermont is a convert to methodiſm, and is eſteemed a *bleſſed* acquiſition by that ſociety.

Miſs Milton's ſenſe of her friend's injuries is ſo very acute, that ſhe has rejected two unexceptionable offers, and transferring the faults of *one* man to the whole ſpecies, has declared herſelf a *determined* member of my ſiſterhood. Her reſentment againſt the baſe, ungrateful, tyrannick ſex is ſo great, that ſhe entirely avoids the ſociety of gentlemen. Her apartments are decorated with hiſtories intended to deſcribe their falſhood; and ſhe ſpends her time in writing ſatires againſt perjured ſwains, and elegies upon deceived nymphs. Her favourite ſubject of converſation is to inveigh againſt Lord Clermont, and ſome of thoſe cenſures have reached his Lordſhip, and contributed to increaſe the unkindneſs which ſhe deplores.

After ſeveral unſucceſsful attempts to form a matrimonial connection with a woman of character, Sir William Milton has taken Miſs Morton again into keeping. Their tempers are too violent for cordiality, ſcarce a day paſſes without a quarrel; and though he congratulates himſelf that he is not bound to the fury for life, ſhe makes his haughty ſpirit bend to her controul. Nay, ſhe affirms, that ſhe may be Lady Milton when ſhe pleaſes, and the bets in this particular are two to one againſt Sir William.

A very ſtrange event has taken place at Danbury ſince I mentioned my favourite abode, and I beg my readers pardon for not informing them of it ſooner. Could any one have believed that after thirty-five years of irreproachable conduct, Miſs Cardamum ſhould at laſt elope with Mr. Inkle. Though this match was completed under the auſpices of Cupid, it does not prove to be a very happy one. Mr. Cardamum is inexorable in point of fortune, and as Mrs. Inkle poſi-

tively refuſes to go behind the counter, or to do any thing inconſiſtent with her dignity, I am afraid the young man is plagued with a well-bred wife, and a ſcanty income. We have excluded her from our genteel aſſembly: I am told ſhe is much piqued at it, but ſuch an unpardonable dereliction of all rules of decorum ought to be ſeverely reprobated.

A great deal has been ſaid lately reſpecting Captain Target's attention to Mrs. Eleanor Singleton. They have been ſurpriſed tête-a-tête at picquet; and I ſaw him with my *own* eyes carry little Fido from church laſt Friday, for fear he ſhould dirty his new pink ſattin ribbon. I have a very good opinion of my friend's underſtanding, and I *hope* it was only a neighbourly action.

Since Mrs. Inkle's marriage, Mrs. Medium has laid ſtrong ſiege to Mr. A ſop, and ſhe manages the battery of her daughter Dolly's merits ſo admirably, that I think his heart *muſt* ſurrender at diſcretion.

diſcretion. His houſekeeper, Mrs. Betty, is of a different opinion.

I ſhall conclude with a ſong lately compoſed by Mrs. Pelham; who ſtill occaſionally ſacrifices to the Muſes. My correſpondent Mrs. Penelope, has luckily favoured me with a copy, juſt in time for publication:

Go daughters of Faſhion for pleaſure repine,
The joys ye purſue are not equal to mine;
The humours of thouſands for yours muſt agree,
Mine centre in Henry, and Henry's in me.

The roſe thrice hath bloom'd on the chaplet of May,
Since I bow'd at the altar, and vow'd to obey;
Talk not of reſtrictions, the bond I approve,
'Tis ſanction'd by reaſon, religion, and love.

Gay carrols the lark as we riſe in the morn,
And at evening the blackbird chaunts ſweet on the thorn,
We join in the concert, why ſhould we refrain?
Our hearts are as grateful, as lively our ſtrain.

We baſk in the ſunſhine which ſummer ſupplies,
And count, fertile autumn! thy exquiſite dies;
No terror in ice-mantled winter we ſee,
A book and a ſong ſtill can conquer ennui.

Domeſtick

Domeſtick, yet cheerful, delighted to blend,
By prudent attentions the lover and friend,
In wedlock's full cup we ſome bitters expect,
And allow for the frailties we try to correct.

Though ſhunning the many, wild Comus's crew;
For ſocial enjoyment we chuſe but a few:
Thoſe few round our table ſhall frequently meet,
Sincere be the welcome, and ſimple the treat.

Our boy on my boſom I cheriſh with pride,
He calls to thoſe duties we gladly divide;
May he live when our limit of being is done,
And our names and our virtues ſurvive in our ſon.

THE END.

THE END.